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MOTORSPORT NEWS

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Japanese company edges clear of Ford in the all-time race winners list at La Sarthe

TOYOTA MAKES IT FIVE WITH DOMINANT DISPLAY AT LE MANS



By Matt James

Toyota has become a five-time winner of Le Mans as its GR010 Hypercar claimed its second win in succession at the classic French endurance race.

Sebastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Ryo Hirakawa led home the sister machine of Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and Jose Maria Lopez to complete a lock-out for the Japanese firm in the leading Hypercar class.

Buemi became a four-time winner of the twice-around-the-clock race with this year's success adding to glory in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

The Swiss racer said: "The whole team, and our crew, executed a perfect race without any mistakes and no damage to the car. It's an incredible feeling to win Le Mans for the fourth time, and the fifth time for Toyota."

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REPORT

INGRAM HITS THE HEIGHTS IN BTCC CLASHES

Hyundai man succeeds twice at Oulton Park p18



INTERVIEW

READERS' Q&A: VIC LEE

Title-winning BTCC team boss tackles posers p20





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COMMENT

Photo: Red Bull Content Pool, Toyota Gazoo Racing, Mike Hills Speed Images, Jakob Ebrey



Toyota has now conquered the Le Mans 24 Hours for five seasons in succession

TOYOTA READY FOR HYPERCAR INFLUX

Toyota winning the Le Mans 24 Hours is hardly a shocker: it had won the last four editions before last weekend's event, and it really only had itself to beat. But the speed bumps that can be encountered along the way in any twice-around-the-clock race mean that nothing is a foregone conclusion.

Nevertheless, it successfully navigated its way to the top and congratulations go to Sébastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Ryo Hirakawa who, in Buemi's words, executed a "perfect" race to beat the sister machine of Kamui Kobayashi, Mike Conway and José María López.

This year's race was always one that was going to be in a holding pattern as the new unified Hypercar regulations begin to swing into full effect. With Peugeot joining the World Endurance Championship in July, things are already starting to ramp up. But if you want to see how exciting the future looks for sportscar racing, check out the news on page six. Every week, it seems, a new manufacturer is committing to the category. Porsche is on the way, so is BMW, Lamborghini and Ferrari among the headline acts. And there are lots beyond that.

Not all of the incoming manufacturers have declared an intention to race at La Sarthe in the future, but it would be a no-brainer. It is, after all, the biggest sportscar race in the world and the appeal of that event alone will be the strongest lure.

Ferrari will hope that its Hypercar can show more reliability than its current Formula 1 offering, the F1-75. It has gone from commanding both the drivers' and constructors' championships this term to a nadir of both scarlet cars parking up in Baku last weekend with broken motors. There is something typically Ferrari about snatching defeat from the jaws of victory, and it is almost a throwback to the Scuderia of old. That will be of no solace to Charles Leclerc, who looks like the only racer who can truly hold a candle to World champion – and Azerbaijan Grand Prix victor – Max Verstappen at the moment.

The incumbent of the readers' questions hot seat this week is former British Touring Car Championship team manager Vic Lee. Although he has had a colourful career away from the circuits, his achievements taking on the bigger factory-blessed outfits in the tin-top world and beating them can't be underestimated and he tackles the MN questions with his usual forthright attitude.

While we reflect on Toyota's win, it is a good time to check out our Motul-supported poll to uncover the favourite motorsport machines from the Japanese firm. We have selected our top 10 and it is your chance to make your voice heard on page 34.

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RED BULL TURNS THE SCREW WITH BAKU ROUT

Max leads home Sergio as Ferrari feels the pain in Azerbaijan



Toyota joy at Le Mans

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Ingram gets his title charge on

Double win for the Hyundai man sets him on a BTCC title charge

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MN readers' Q&A: Vic Lee interview

The title-winning tin-top team boss tackles the posers set by the Motorsport News faithful

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Retro: Courtney's Formula 3 charge, 20 years on...

FORMULA 1 REPORT: BAKU



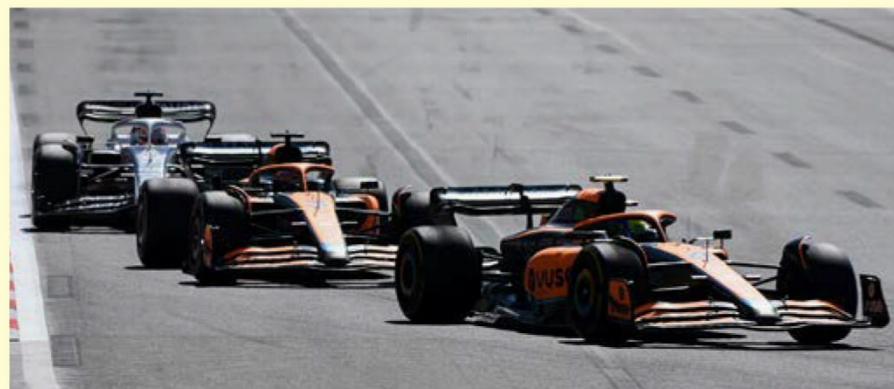
Max led home his Red Bull team-mate



The Red Bull duo was all smiles at the end of the Azerbaijan Grand Prix

RED BULL HAMMERS HOME THE PAIN FOR FERRARI

Dodgy motors turn the prancing horse into a lame donkey. By **James Roberts**



Lando Norris and Daniel Ricciardo battled throughout

F1 RESULTS

Azerbaijan Grand Prix Laps: 51 Distance: 190.179 miles

Track: Baku Street Circuit

DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1 Max Verstappen	Red Bull	1h34m05.941s
2 Sergio Perez	Red Bull	+20.823s
3 George Russell	Mercedes	+45.995s
4 Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	+1m11.679s
5 Pierre Gasly	AlphaTauri	+1m17.299s
6 Sebastian Vettel	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+1m24.099s
7 Fernando Alonso	Alpine-Renault	+1m28.596s
8 Daniel Ricciardo	McLaren-Mercedes	+1m32.207s
9 Lando Norris	McLaren-Mercedes	+1m32.556s
10 Esteban Ocon	Alpine-Renault	+1m48.184s

11 Valtteri Bottas (Alfa Romeo-Ferrari) -1 lap; 12 Alexander Albon (Williams-Mercedes) -1 lap; 13 Yuki Tsunoda (AlphaTauri) -1 lap; 14 Mick Schumacher (Haas-Ferrari) -1 lap; 15 Nicholas Latifi (Williams-Mercedes) -1 lap; 16 Lance Stroll (Aston Martin-Mercedes) vibrations/46 laps; 17 Kevin Magnussen (Haas-Ferrari) engine/31 laps; 18 Guanyu Zhou (Alfa Romeo-Ferrari) hydraulics/23 laps; 19 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) engine/21 laps; 20 Carlos Sainz (Ferrari) hydraulics/8 laps.

Drivers' Championship: 1 Verstappen 150; 2 Perez 129; 3 Leclerc 116; 4 Russell 99; 5 Sainz 83; 6 Hamilton 62, etc. **Constructors' Championship:** 1 Red Bull 279; 2 Ferrari 199; 3 Mercedes 161; 4 McLaren 65; 5 Alpine 47; 6 Alfa Romeo 41.

Oh dear. What is going on at Ferrari? A double DNF on the streets of Baku and a 1-2 for Red Bull has cemented Max Verstappen's lead at the top of the World championship standings.

It's worth remembering that after round three in Australia, Leclerc enjoyed a 46-point lead over Verstappen. Heading towards Montreal for round nine this coming weekend, the Dutchman has 34 more than his Ferrari rival. A swing of 80 points.

And yet Leclerc has pace, especially on a Saturday. He recorded his fourth consecutive pole position last weekend – but he just isn't converting that into victories. After Baku, he hasn't won since Melbourne in early April.

Although Leclerc was beaten into Turn 1 by Sergio Perez from the front row of the grid, he had seized command of the Azerbaijan Grand Prix by taking advantage of an early virtual safety car. Unfortunately the virtual safety car was deployed in order to recover his team-mate's stricken scarlet machine. On lap nine Carlos Sainz came to a sudden halt at Turn 4 with hydraulic failure.

Heading into the 20th lap, Leclerc enjoyed a 13.6-second lead over Verstappen (who had passed Perez into Turn 1 on lap 15). But rounding the quick final corners at the end of the lap, Leclerc slowed with a large plume of blue smoke emerging from the back of his F1-75. It was game over.

"This hurts," said a despondent Leclerc. "We really need to learn from this to prevent it from happening again. In the first part of the season we have been fast and haven't had these problems, but it's very disappointing and we need to analyse what happened."

With Ferrari-powered customer teams also suffering issues (Kevin Magnussen brought out the only other VSC of the race when he slowed his Haas on lap 33), Ferrari are aware it needs to resolve their reliability issues quickly if it is to sustain its challenge for its first drivers' title since 2007.



Charles Leclerc's hopes of victory went up in smoke – like his engine

While Baku is known for its unpredictable races – and Max is the sixth different winner of this event (of the six held) – Sunday's grand prix was less chaotic than in times past. That would have been a relief to Max who lost this race in the closing stages last year. This time around he was comfortably 20s ahead of his team-mate at the flag.

Joining the Red Bull pair on the rostrum overlooking the Caspian Sea was George Russell, who took his third podium of the season. Once again he outperformed his experienced team-mate Lewis Hamilton, but the seven-time champ was suffering more than Russell with his car set-up.

More problematic in Baku over the four-mile track's long straights was the bouncing issues and Hamilton gingerly stepped out of his car after severely damaging his back. His fourth place was awarded the driver of the day fan vote.

"I was biting down on my teeth with the pain and it was pure adrenaline," said Hamilton, when asked about how he was able to finish. "I can't express the pain I was experiencing on the straights and I couldn't wait for it to end."

Hamilton and his team have a short recovery time, both for his back and the engineering solutions, as they cross the Atlantic and head to Montreal for next weekend's race.

Solid performances for Pierre Gasly (AlphaTauri), Sebastian Vettel (Aston Martin) and Fernando Alonso (Alpine) made up the major points positions – ahead of the two McLarens.

After a couple of lacklustre performances, Dan Ricciardo finished fractionally ahead of his team-mate Lando Norris after opting for an alternate tyre strategy (by starting on the hard). The pair had run together in close contention across the 51 laps and the McLaren pitwall had to ensure their strategies didn't compromise each other – despite the vocal desires from both drivers for the strategy to work in their favour.

"If this is his best pace, I've got more," said Ricciardo on lap eight when told to stay behind Norris.

Then in the closing stages, Norris was told to hold station behind his team-mate. When he queried why he should, he was told by his engineer Will Joseph that it was "to return the favour", to which Norris replied: "Yeah, that was for strategy... this is for a finishing position."

In the final laps, he closed right up on the Australian and finished just 0.3s behind at the flag. Afterwards, Norris was philosophical. "It's tough, but we're here to race and I want to finish eighth not ninth."

Right now, Ferrari would be happy to finish in any points position...



It was a strong weekend for Pierre Gasly with fifth place

RACING NEWS



Champions are unhappy

VERSTAPPEN AND ALONSO QUESTION PLAN FOR WAGE CAP

World champions Max Verstappen and Fernando Alonso have questioned the need for a limit on Formula 1 driver salaries that is currently under discussion.

While the F1 cost cap will be reduced to £109m in 2023 but the drivers' wages are not part of that limitation. However, there is a push to make the drivers' salaries part of the restrictions with a proposed combined salary cap of £24.3m.

Dutch Red Bull driver Verstappen said: "At the moment, F1 is becoming more and more popular, and everyone is making more and more money, including the teams and FOM. Everyone is benefiting.

"So why would the drivers with their IP rights and everything be capped, [the people] who actually bring the show and put their lives at risk? Because we do, eventually. So for me, it's completely wrong."

Spanish Alpine driver Fernando Alonso agreed with his rival. "Drivers have been always outside this [cost cap] topic, and I think the drivers, they are using us more and more to promote Formula 1. We do more and more events we are more in contact with the fans."

MAGNUSEN SAYS F1 RACE DIRECTION IS NOW "INCONSISTENT"

Haas Formula 1 driver Kevin Magnussen has hit out at the two new grand prix race directors, Niels Wittich and Eduardo Freitas, as the pair are sharing duties in race control.

The duo was employed to replace Michael Masi after the controversy surrounding the closing stages of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix at the end of the 2021 season.

Wittich and Freitas are splitting the role between them and it was Wittich in charge for the Azerbaijan Grand Prix last season. He made a controversial ruling about the pit entry and exit in Baku, saying that racers would be able to touch the white entry and exit line and only get a penalty if they exceeded them – which was contrary to the previous understanding of the regulations.

Magnussen said: "Maybe it's become slightly more difficult at the moment to really understand what the rules are. I think it's been more consistent [in the past] than it is right now. It'd be nice if their stance or the way they interpret the rules would be totally consistent. Then as a driver, it would be easier to understand."

The Dane added. "I don't worry too much about it. It's like worrying about the weather. I can't change it."

FERRARI PROMISES A FIX AFTER ENGINE NIGHTMARE IN BAKU

Team boss Binotto looking at how to solve the Scuderia's nightmare with powerplants

Photos: Motorsport Images



Up in smoke: Ferrari's Binotto (inset) says failures must be stopped

By Matt James

Ferrari boss Mattia Binotto says the team will have to change the way it uses its engines after the hammer blow of a double failure in Azerbaijan on Sunday.

Leader Charles Leclerc, who had qualified on pole position, was almost 15s ahead of the pack when his motor failed and he was forced to retire on lap 21. Team-mate Carlos Sainz had been ruled out on lap eight with a similar problem.

It means Leclerc has fallen to third place in the drivers' championship behind Max Verstappen and Sergio Perez, who took a 1-2 finish for Red Bull in Baku.

While Binotto said he was worried about the unreliability of the F1-75, he said alterations to the way the team

thought about its powerplant could hold the key to a short-term answer.

"It is a concern," he said. "It's even more a concern because I do not have the answer, and I would like to have one right now. Sometimes the problems you may have are not a short fix.

"I don't know what will be the strategy we need to adopt [to fix it]: if it's simply shorter mileage, or a different type of usage, or a short fix, because whatever has happened is really a short-fix solution. So something that I think we'll understand in the next days, and hopefully we'll have a clearer answer by the time we're in Canada [this weekend]."

Ferrari is second in the constructors' championship standings, 80 points behind Red Bull after the opening eight rounds of the championship.

HAMILTON PLEDGES TO CONTINUE TO SPEAK OUT

Lewis Hamilton has encouraged Formula 1 drivers to continue to speak out on issues they care about despite the president of the FIA, Mohammed Ben Sulayem, saying that racers should not be so forceful with their opinions.

Ben Sulayem was quoted as saying drivers should not

"impose their beliefs" on others, but later expanded on his comments. He added: "As a driver, I have believed in sport as a catalyst of progress in society. I value the commitment of all drivers and champions for a better future."

Speaking ahead of the Azerbaijan Grand Prix, seven-time F1 champion

Hamilton, who has long been an advocate for the causes he believes in, said: "I encourage all of the drivers to be more outspoken in future and speak about things they care about. I'm proud to see what Seb [Vettel] does and to be an ally of his."

Vettel then said: "It is important to express and

mention [these topics], raise awareness, make people aware there are lots of things we can improve on."

● The FIA has appointed a diversity, equality and inclusion advisor. Tanya Kutsenko has been described by the governing body as "an accomplished international development expert".



Hamilton still wants his say



WILLIAMS PUNISHED FOR MISSING COST-CAP CUT-OFF

The Williams Formula 1 team has been fined £20,000 for breaking grand prix racing's new cost-cap regulations and has become the first squad to be punished.

The cost cap, which has been reduced to £113m this season, was set at £117m last term. Williams missed the deadline to submit its accounts, which was at the end of March this year. The team's bosses informed the governing body, the FIA, ahead of the infringement and was found to have committed a "procedural breach" and had to

pay the fine as well as cover the costs of the cost cap administrators.

Several teams have raised concerns that a number of teams would not be able to adhere to the new £113m cost cap for 2022 and could be forced to miss grands prix towards the end of the campaign just to make sure they adhere to the limitation.

Williams, which was taken over by Dorilton investment group in August 2020, has scored points on two occasions so far this season with Alex Albon driving. It is 10th and last in the constructors' championship.

VESTI BREAKS HIS WINNING DUCK WITH BAKU FORMULA 2 TRIUMPH

Series newcomer Frederik Vesti took his maiden Formula 2 win in Baku last weekend when he claimed the spoils in the feature race.

The ART Grand Prix driver ran in second place after the initial exchanges but hunted down Prema Powerteam's Jehan Daruvala and then held on to his advantage despite a race disrupted by caution periods. Carlin's Liam Lawson took third, while points leader Felipe Drugovich managed fifth place.

Juri Vips was on pole for the feature race and was in command in his Hitech machine but crashed out with just four laps remaining. His blunder handed a

second victory of the season to Monaco winner Dennis Hauger in his ART Grand Prix machine. Logan Sargeant was second for Carlin ahead of MP Motorsport's Drugovich. Drugovich now leads the points table by a whopping 49 points from ART's Theo Pourchaire.

● Van Amersfoort Racing driver Amaury Cordeel has been suspended after reaching 12 penalty points on his racing licence. The series newcomer caused an accident with Briton Olli Caldwell in the feature race in Baku and will now have to sit out the next rounds at Silverstone on July 2-3.



Hauger claimed the feature race

RACING NEWS

FRENCH DRIVER BANNED FROM LE MANS AFTER SHUNTS

French racer Philippe Cimadomo was barred from competing in last weekend's Le Mans 24 Hours after three incidents in the build-up to the twice-around-the-clock race.

The bronze-graded driver was in collision with a Chevrolet Corvette in the opening free practice session and, according to the officials, nearly caused an incident in the pitlane.

The national-level sports prototype racer then crashed the TDS Oreca in the Porsche Curves and the machine required a new tub. He had been due to share the car with Mathias Beche and Tijmen van der Helm.

A statement from the stewards of the 24 hours was issued on Thursday. It said "[he] is not driving to the standard required to safely participate in the remainder of the event".

Dutch racer Nyck de Vries was called up at the last minute to replace him. The revamped crew finished fourth in class.



TDS had late driver swap



The winners greet the first-place car

WINNERS PRAISE TOYOTA AFTER "PERFECT" PERFORMANCE TO SCOOP LE MANS GLORY

Japanese firm overtakes Ford in the record books with five victories in the French classic

By Matt James

Le Mans winner Sébastien Buemi has paid tribute to Toyota for a faultless race at Le Mans that enabled the Japanese manufacturer to take its fifth-straight victory in the 24 hour-race

Buemi shared with Brendon Hartley and Ryo Hirakawa to prevail over the sister

machine of Jose Maria Lopez, Mike Conway and Kamui Kobayashi by just over two minutes. Both machines had completed 380 laps and finished five laps clear of the third-placed Glickenhaus 007 LHM of Richard Westbrook, Ryan Briscoe and Franck Mailleux.

"It's hard for me to express myself after that race because it's just an amazing feeling, especially to be in

the centre of the podium with Ryo and Brendon," said Buemi. "The whole team, and our crew, executed a perfect race without any mistakes and no damage to the car. It's an incredible feeling to win Le Mans for the fourth time, and the fifth time for Toyota."

Hirakawa was making his first start in the top class at Le Mans after two previous LMP2 outings. He said:

"We had a perfect strategy, great pitstops and a race without any problems; I don't think we could do more."

The winning car got the upper hand over its sister machine when Lopez was required to reset the hybrid systems after the car stopped on track with eight hours to go.

● For full Le Mans results and report, see pages 16-17

GTE PRO DIVISION TO BE AXED AT THE END OF THE 2022 SEASON

The GTE Pro division will be dropped from the World Endurance Championship for 2023 as more and more firms are looking to expand into sportscar racing's top class.

The category has waned in recent years and only three fully fledged manufacturer

entries – Porsche, Corvette and Ferrari – took part in last weekend's Le Mans 24 Hours. With Porsche and Ferrari looking to step up a division, the Automobile Club de l'Ouest has taken the decision to pull the plug on GTE Pro. Only five cars

are contesting the full 2022 World Endurance Championship campaign. Instead, the GT class will be dedicated to GT3 Premium machines, which will be run for cost-capped versions of standard GT3 cars and more standard race tyres.

The GTE Pro class has been part of the World Endurance Championship since 2012.

GTE Am meanwhile will be dropped after the 2023 season in favour of the new GT3 Premium division, where factory entries will not be allowed.



Goodbye to GTE Pro battles

LIGER LINK-UP FOR NEW LAMBORGHINI LMDH PROGRAMME

Lamborghini has confirmed that it will link up with Ligier for its fresh assault on the World Endurance Championship and the IMSA SportsCar Championship.

The Italian firm had already confirmed its intention to move into the revamped top class of sportscar racing and had to choose between one of four suppliers – Ligier, Multimatic, Oreca and Dallara – to form the basis of its LMP2-derived cars.

Lamborghini Squadra Corse boss Giorgio Sanna explained: "We are glad to announce the technical partnership with Ligier on the LMDh project. As in Lamborghini Squadra Corse, we have found in Magny-Cours [the base of the Ligier firm] a team of young, competent and motivated people."

"We already feel as one team and we look forward for the next challenges in front of us."



THE WRAPS COME OFF BMW'S NEW LMDH RACER FOR 2023

BMW has revealed images of its M Hybrid V8 sportscar with which it will contest next year's IMSA series.

The Dallara-underpinned car will be operated by the Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing team in the US-based but the marque has yet to make it clear whether it will race at Le Mans, although it had previously expressed a desire to do so. The new unified sportscar regulations means cars can contest both the World Endurance Championship and IMSA, including the 24 Hours of Daytona.

Testing of the new car is due to take

place in the United States soon.

Franciscus van Meel, boss of BMW M GmbH, said: "The most critical task and the greatest challenge for the design team in the LMDh programme design team was that the prototype must be clearly recognisable as a BMW M Motorsport car."

"And I can say this to all the fans, just one look is enough to confirm that the BMW M Hybrid V8 is a BMW. It clearly carries the genes of BMW M."

"I also love the camouflage livery with its references to the great history of the brand in North America."

CADILLAC SET FOR TWIN-PRONGED ATTACK ON SPORTSCAR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Cadillac has published images of the prototype LMDh machine that is set to chase glory in the World Endurance Championship and the IMSA in 2023.

The car, codenamed the Project GTP Hypercar, will race at Le Mans in 2023 and has been built around a Dallara framework. The machine will be powered by a new 5.5-litre V8 fitted with the latest hybrid systems. Sources suggest the car will begin its development process later this season, and the Chip Ganassi

team and Action Express Racing have been confirmed as the teams which will run the car across the two classes.

Chris Mikalauskas, lead exterior creative designer at Cadillac, said: "The Project GTP Hypercar is a unique convergence of form and function and showcases Cadillac's future performance aesthetic. We have plenty more to come, from the upcoming race car to amazing production vehicles."



The Cadillac, codenamed Project GTP Hypercar, has a family look

KEEN LEADS RAM PORTIMAO ALL-STAR LINE-UP

Keen to make RAM and GT4 debut in quartet alongside British GT points leader Loggie

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Alexis Goude



Sharp-looking Merc has stellar line-up

By Graham Keilloh

RAM Racing for next month's Portimao 24 Hours has an all-star line-up including British GT's championship leader Ian Loggie, record race-winner Phil Keen and his former title-contending partner Jon Minshaw.

They will race a GT4 Mercedes-AMG in the July 9-10 24H Series event, and the stellar quartet is completed by prolific classic car collector and historic racer Katarina

Kyvalova. The race will be RAM's first-ever entry into the GT4 division.

The quartet with RAM were set to compete in last year's Portimao 24 hours, but the event was cancelled at the last minute due to Covid. And while Loggie is a RAM regular, Keen in Portugal will both race with RAM – usually his British GT rival – and in GT4 for the first time.

Keen said: "While this will be my first race with RAM, I know the team so well through racing against them in British GT that I already feel like a part of the furniture in the garage.

"The car will no doubt be on the money. I've tested them [GT4s] a few times, but never actually raced one. Everything happens a bit slower than in a GT3, but I really enjoy the challenge of them.

"It's great to be back sharing with Jon. Katarina will get on the pace really quickly and I'm looking forward to sharing with Ian for the first time as he's been one of the standout bronze drivers in recent seasons. We're certainly not going into this one just looking to make up the numbers."



Keen races for RAM Racing for first time

WILLIAMSON MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME

British GT frontrunner Lewis Williamson says there is more to come as he and Pro-Am partner James Cottingham make up for a shortage of mileage compared to their rivals.

GP3 race-winner Williamson, 32, this season has returned to full-time racing to join historic ace Cottingham in a new 2 Seas Mercedes GT3 partnership. They have qualified in the top three in the last two rounds and, after being caught in a first-lap crash at Silverstone, finished second at Donington Park.

Williamson told Motorsport News: "We'll build on this [Donington], and going into the next one at Snetterton we've learned

a lot, we'll improve a lot.

"The pace has been there, Silverstone was looking promising but that didn't turn out the way we hoped; Oulton Park, one race was OK the second race wasn't. We'll hopefully take this momentum forward now.

"It's super tough for [Cottingham], you've got to give him credit,

because some of the other cars have done four races here [Donington] already this year, loads of testing.

James has done nothing.

"I've not raced in two years so it's an eye opener. I felt more comfortable [here] than I have ever done in the car so far and that's purely because of me getting more laps."



British GT Porsche back on the pace



The new 2 Seas Merc (4) has been at sharp end

GLENN NAMED FIA GIRLS ON TRACK UK AMBASSADOR

Race official Carol Glenn has been appointed as the latest FIA Girls on Track UK ambassador for the programme aiming to inspire girls and women to join the motorsport industry.

Glenn has over 30 years' motorsport experience, becoming an official in 1988 and working as a marshal, championship coordinator and secretary of the meeting at a national and international level across circuit, sprint and rallycross events.

She also founded Next Racing Generation Motorsport that aims to offer drivers from diverse backgrounds a motorsport career pathway, and has also received the British Women Racing Drivers Club's GoldStar award for voluntary services in motorsport. Glenn in addition is a member of governing body Motorsport UK's Women in Motorsport sub-committee.

Girls on Track UK is a joint project of the FIA and Motorsport

MALVERN HAILS TYRE BOOST

British GT competitor Scott Malvern has hailed improvements in handling the Pirelli tyres after he and Team Parker Porsche 911 GT3 partner Nick Jones showed improved pace at Donington Park.

The 2018 British GT4 Pro-Am champion pair had struggled in the opening two rounds of 2022, but looked more potent in the recent Donington weekend on the way to finishing 10th having run third for much of the race.

Malvern told Motorsport News: "We're in a much better position now to compete with the guys at

the front. We can fight for pole positions and a competitive race.

"We've made a lot of changes to how we use the tyres. The ambient temperature coming up is a benefit for us, we can get front tyre temp much easier.

"Between ourselves and the team and Pirelli we've really tried to understand what we need to change and what we need to improve on. We're now one of the only competitive Porsches on Pirellis in the world, other than when it was 40 degrees in Red Bull Ring. The team have done an amazing job."



Glenn gets Girls on Track role



Jones was back at Le Mans track

JONES TAKES DOUBLE LE MANS WIN

British GT racer Nick Jones took two class victories with Team Parker Racing in the Porsche Sprint Challenge France races supporting last weekend's Le Mans 24-Hour race.

The 2018 British GT4 Pro-Am champion took part in the contest, the first open to amateurs offering the opportunity to race on the famous 8.5-mile circuit, for the second year running having last year in the then one-off counter finished second in class after overcoming car damage.

In this year's double header, held on the Thursday and Friday before the latest Le Mans running, Jones twice won in his GT3 R class dominantly, both times finishing eighth overall, despite the team having to fit a new engine and gearbox to his Porsche 911 after woes in practice.

RACING NEWS

SEB'S OULTON SUPPORT

Cheshire-based racer Seb Morris had some 150 guests cheering him on at his local Oulton Park circuit last weekend in Porsche Carrera Cup GB.

The GT champion has switched to Carrera Cup this year racing with Team Parker Racing. The 26-year-old has had considerable success at Oulton, with two race victories each in Ginetta Juniors and British GT.

Morris said: "I've got about 150 VIP guests scattered all over the circuit. I've got some with touring car teams, some in Porsche, some in the boxes, so I've had to spread them everywhere to make sure everyone's happy and accommodated. I might even need the help of mum and dad to look after them all."



Morris had home fans

ARON LOOKS FOR NON-REVERSED SUCCESS

GB3 racer Bryce Aron is looking for better results in non-reversed grid races after taking his first-ever victory in the category in the recent Donington Park round's reversed-grid contest.

The 18-year-old American, who graduated from Formula Ford to GB3 last year with Carlin, switched to Hitech GP for his sophomore GB3 season this year. His Donington triumph followed a round on from taking his first GB3 podium finish in Silverstone's reversed-grid race.

Aron told Motorsport News: "It's nice to win a race, a win is a win, but I'd like to do it in race one or race two [the non-reversed-grid races], or be in top five in race one or race two. It's definitely where we need to be, especially as a second-year driver."

"In the future it's maximising qualifying. If we qualify well we should be able to finish even better. It's getting the maximum out of the peak of the tyre, making sure everything's all set ready for quali, in my mind to make sure I have everything I know I need to do all set, and executing it."



Qualifying will be key for Aron



Brit was back after pit hit

Photos: Italian GT Championship. Jakob Ebrey, Dan Bathie



Middleton had multiple injuries

MIDDLETON RETURNS TO ACTION AFTER INJURIES

British rising star is back just six weeks after being hit by rival car in the pitlane

By Graham Keilloh

GT rising star Stuart Middleton returned to racing in the latest Italian GT Sprint championship round just six weeks after sustaining multiple injuries from being hit by a rival car.

The 22-year-old from Northumberland was hit by Jens Klingmann's BMW while standing in

the pitlane during Monza's late-April Sprint championship season opener awaiting his Imperiale Racing Lamborghini Huracan GT3 team-mate Alberto Di Folco arriving for their driver change.

Middleton sustained a dislocated and fractured wrist, a broken big toe and pulled ligaments in his left leg. He told Motorsport News last month he was aiming to return for the next Sprint

championship round, the early-June Misano meeting, something he indeed achieved mere days after having a plaster cast removed from his left arm.

Middleton and Di Folco finished sixth in Misano's race one, but didn't start race two due to an engine sensor failure on the way to the grid.

Middleton said at Misano: "In terms of my injuries this weekend, it wasn't too bad. Misano is quite a physical track

though, with the slow-speed corners and so I had to fight and hustle the car a bit. After free practice I was a bit sore, I had to compensate but got through it OK.

"We've got a big gap now in the calendar so I can recover fully before the next round at Imola [in early September], and we'll be at Goodwood [Festival of Speed] in a couple of weeks with Lamborghini which I'm really looking forward to."



Browning and Granfors push

GB3 LEAD PAIR CONFIDENT FOR SNETTERTON NEXT UP

Both the GB3 championship's chief title protagonists Joel Granfors and Luke Browning believe they will be strong in the forthcoming triple-header round at Snetterton in 10 days' time.

The pair are separated by just one point at GB3's table top heading into the championship's fourth round of eight this season. This follows a dramatic Donington Park round where both were removed in a first-lap multi-car crash in race one, before bagging two points finishes. The chasing pack in the table closed in during the Donington weekend and Carlin's Callum Voisin, fifth in the standings, is 36 points off the

summit with 35 available for a win.

Fortec's Swedish racer Granfors said: "We've been testing there [Snetterton], not a lot, but when we have tested there we've been quick so hopefully just keep up the pace. We've had good pace in all three tracks we've driven at so far, so I don't think there is anything why we shouldn't have good pace there either."

Hitech GP's Browning told Motorsport News: "Snetterton we'll be strong I think, we've been good in testing. It all comes from quali, hopefully we'll have no issues with traffic and then we'll be flying."

BOSS BURCHILL TO BOUNCE BACK IN '23

MG Cup chairman and competitor Peter Burchill is working to be back racing next season after being sidelined since early 2022 by a stroke.

Burchill, who races an MG ZS 180 in MG Cup's frontrunning Class C, has confirmed that he can reapply for his race licence from January 12 2023 and he also hopes to get out in a trackday this autumn.

Burchill told Motorsport News: "I'm lighter, fitter. I still have issues with my right side, it's a lot weaker than my left, so I'm working on my motor skills. I drive a road car but I couldn't at this moment race a car because I couldn't grip the wheel and release quick enough, but it's getting there."

"I have two physio sessions a week and I joined a gym. At 50 it's quite a shock to suddenly become a gym addict!"

"At MG Live [last weekend] I'm going to be trying to get into my friends' cars, because I'm conscious you've got to get in and out quickly,



Burchill wears race suit at home

so I'm going to be working on that because getting out my road car I'm a little stiff. I walk round the house with a race suit on, I put my gloves and helmet on.

"I've been racing for 20 years and I want to continue racing for another hopefully 20 years, it's addictive."

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RALLY NEWS

ROVANPERA TALENTED AND FAST BUT NOT SUPERHUMAN, SAYS TOYOTA'S LINDSTROM

Co-driver turned sporting boss calls for a dose of realism after tough Sardinia outing for star

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com, M-Sport, Red Bull Content Pool



Rovanpera was fifth in Italy



Rovanpera said he "drove clever" on Rally Italy to land some points

By Graham Lister

Kalle Rovanpera can't be considered "superhuman" even though he's achieving results beyond his 21 years.

That's the view of Kaj Lindstrom, the factory Toyota team's sporting director, after his younger compatriot's run of World Rally Championship victories ended in Sardinia earlier this month.

Rovanpera came home fifth after a tough outing on the Mediterranean island having opened the road on the loose-surface island counter on the opening leg of the event.

Speaking to the WRC's official website WRC.com, former co-driver Lindstrom said: "Kalle's good, he's talented and fast, but he's not a superhuman.

"With his starting position [in

Sardinia], he started first on the road and in this rally, unfortunately, you're suffering from there. After that, he did a very good job of maintaining his position, meaning that he kept Thierry [Neuville] behind. He finished fifth and extended his lead to 55 points, so it was incredibly good.

"Even though Kalle is so young, he is very mature in his mind. He understands that he takes what he can

get, but not by doing anything silly. But we need to be realistic."

Reflecting on his Sardinia outing, which followed on from wins in Sweden, Croatia and Portugal, plus a fourth place on January's Monte Carlo Rally, Rovanpera said: "It was a tough weekend. We just knew that we had to be clever because results like this can be important when we count the points at the end of the year. We

scored more than our nearest rival in the championship so we can be quite happy with that."

Rovanpera will carry his healthy title advantage into the next World championship round, Kenya's Safari Rally, which runs from June 22-26 and marks the return of Sébastien Loeb and Ogier for their third appearances of the season with M-Sport and Toyota respectively.

REID PRAISES LATEST FIA RALLY STAR FINAL WINNER SMART

The first FIA Rally Star training season line-up has its latest member following the African final in South Africa last month.

Max Smart, 19, was chosen as the winner at the event, which took place at the Zwartkops Raceway close to Pretoria, and will join Estonia's Romet Jurgenson, who triumphed in the FIA Rally Star European Final in January, and Oman's Abdullah Masoud Altawqi, the winner of the FIA Rally Star MENA Final in

March, in the 2023 FIA Rally Star Training Season.

Along with the winners of the upcoming Asia-Pacific, North American and South American continental finals – plus the winner of the all-female final in the USA – the three winners so far will take part in six practice rallies and receive substantial coaching in 2023.

At the end of next year, the best four drivers will get a season in the Junior WRC in 2024 with the best three getting a

second JWRC campaign in 2025.

FIA vice-president for sport and 2001 World champion co-driver Robert Reid was part of the jury that chose South African Smart. He said: "It's not just speed on the track that we have been looking for, we are looking at future potential. This programme goes on for a number of years so we want somebody who can win in two or three years, and we've measured that in different ways. We've looked at fitness, at reaction times,

we've had a lengthy interview, we've had feedback from the driver coach, from the mechanics. We've really been really looking at these drivers very carefully."

Meanwhile, 20-year-old South African Kristie Ellis will go up against Briton Katie Milner plus Middle East-based Farah Zakaria and Swede Maja Hallén Fellenius in the FIA Rally Star Women's Final. Ellis was the best-performing female in the African selection event.



Reid has scrutinised the drivers



Marczyk took Rally Poland

MN-BACKED MARCZYK TAKES EUROPEAN RALLY WIN AT HOME

A driver picked out by Motorsport News as a future World championship star is a winner at European level – despite a late scare.

WRC2 rookie Miko Marczyk, driving a Skoda Fabia, was making a one-off return to the ERC and promptly won the 78th Rally Poland, his home round of the championship, last weekend after battling back from an overheating issue.

He beat Junior WRC champion Tom

Kristensson by 10 seconds in the process as two-time 2022 winner, Nil Solans, crashed out leg one due to steering damage.

"It was not easy," said Marczyk, twice the winner of the Polish championship. "Yesterday was a really good day from our side – we were fast and we had luck too. It's a shame that Nil did not finish the day, but it was all part of the fast pace.

"Today was tough. The start was OK,

but Tom was moving closer to us. I felt good in the Mikolajki Max stage and decided to push the car to build a gap, but one kilometre before the finish line we got some gravel in the radiator. We were lucky – a kilometre more and we would probably not have had an engine because the temperature was up to 140 degrees.

"We are here as the winners of Rally Poland. It's unbelievable because this

shows me that my path of development and doing everything step by step is working. After some years we are fast and reliable, and we are on the finishing line."

Spaniard Efren Llarena finished fourth behind Estonian Ken Torn, the 2021 ERC Junior champion, after engine issues slowed Llarena's Skoda. He continues to lead the championship, however, while Simone Tempestini completed the top five.

M-SPORT CHARGE BREEN REVEALS CHANGE OF APPROACH IN WRC

Craig Breen has given more insight into his podium return in the World Rally Championship.

The Irishman had a poor run of results in his M-Sport Ford Puma Rally1 by finishing second on Rally Italy, despite having not competed on the Alghero-based

event since 2018.

Explaining his approach to the gravel event, the Irishman told WRC.com: "It was more of a change in my own approach. It's just been a case of me settling into it and not getting too carried away. I suppose it was something I knew myself that

needed to be done, and with the people around me also, of course.

"That's been the key. It's been a difficult couple of rallies since Monte Carlo, and including Monte Carlo, actually.

"I never really felt fully at home, but this weekend it all just seemed to click.

I got into a rhythm, found the car much easier and I felt confident. The car is getting better and better."

Breen is set to make his Safari Rally debut in Kenya next week fourth in the standings, 13 behind second-placed Thierry Neuville.



Breen heralds a fresh approach



Photos: Martin Walsh, Paul and Ben Lawrence

Former winner MacHale is back in Donegal

MACHALE FACES DONEGAL CHALLENGE FOR PACKED EVENT

Iconic Irish showdown celebrates its 50th anniversary edition

By Martin Walsh

Gareth MacHale will head a stellar 160-car entry on this weekend's Donegal Rally, one of the biggest events in the Irish rally calendar.

The Irish rallying landscape had changed considerably since MacHale won Donegal in 2009 and 2010 in his Ford Focus WRC. On this weekend's 50th anniversary event and once more co-driven by Brian Murphy, he will drive a right-hand-drive VW Polo GTI R5.

However, the 2010 Irish Tarmac champion is under no illusions following back-to-back outings in the new car on the Tyrone Rally and the Circuit of Munster Rally two weeks ago. While the former ended after just a stage and a half due to mechanical issues, he completed all nine stages of the latter finishing eighth overall. He told Motorsport News: "It's been over 10 years since I competed in a championship. I did two rallies in 2018 in an R5

TOP 10 SEEDDED ENTRIES

Donegal International Rally

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	Sam Moffett/Keith Moriarty	Ford Fiesta WRC
2	Callum Devine/Noel O'Sullivan	VW Polo GTI R5
3	Josh Moffett/Andy Hayes	Hyundai i20 R5
4	Alastair Fisher/Gordon Noble	VW Polo GTI R5
5	Matt Edwards/David Moynihan	Citroen C3 Rally2
6	Cathan McCourt/Liam Moynihan	Ford Fiesta Rally2
7	Meirion Evans/Jonathan Jackson	VW Polo GTI R5
8	Declan Boyle/James O'Reilly	Ford Fiesta WRC
9	Garry Jennings/Rory Kennedy	Ford Fiesta R5
10	Jonathan Creer/Dai Roberts	Citroen C3 Rally2

Fiesta. There are a lot of things to contend with, I have to get my notes back up to speed. The characteristics of the car are completely different, corner speeds, braking and all of that compared to the WR car.'

"The launch is also different, that's why I stalled on the line of the first stage on the Circuit of Munster. It's a learning curve, this rally is a test. The lads in the National and the Tarmac are at 10 tenths, you can see that, it's a very high level. It was evident when Craig Breen did the series in 2018, he's a works driver and was on the door handles to win the championship."

MacHale will also compete in the Tipperary Stonethrowers and the Cork 20 and will then assess his position. "Seat time is important and you can see that with Josh Moffett," he added. "We were dropping about three seconds a kilometre on the first loop, now we have that down to a second, I'm happy enough. I am going to Donegal for three days of competition not for three wins, that's for sure."

The quality-packed entry for Donegal includes over 30 R5 or Rally 2 cars and the main event has 65 reserves. A further 27 historics will run along with 22 juniors make up a total entry of over 200 cars.

MULHOLLAND TO DRIVE SKODA IN TRIBUTE TO HIS DAD

Johnnie Mulholland will make an emotional first start in a four-wheel-drive car on this week's Donegal Rally, competing in a Skoda Fabia S2000 his late father John was supposed to drive four years ago.

John passed away in 2019 but had been set to do Donegal the year prior only for an operation to become available on the weekend of the rally. It means the car was fully prepped but never competed.

That will all change this weekend when Mulholland Jr, who usually competes in a

Ford Fiesta Rally4 in the Junior British Rally Championship, takes it out in support of Friends of the Cancer Centre charity.

"I don't care about where we finish to be honest," Mulholland told Motorsport News. "If there's a bit of a battle to be had we'll go for it but we're up against R5s in the same class and the S2000 can't really compete with the likes of those cars anymore. In all honesty we're out for a bit of fun and really just to get to the finish and pay tribute to my dad and do what the car was intended to do."



Johnnie Mulholland will pay tribute to his late father John

HIRST TAKES ADVANTAGE IN WELSH CHAMPIONSHIP

A third win in three events in the Welsh Rally Championship has set Matthew Hirst up as title favourite for the championship.

His commanding win on the Plains Rally in his Ford Fiesta R5 backed up similar results on Rally North Wales and the Rallynuts Stages. Hirst is also tackling the BTRDA season and was particularly pleased with his pace in the Scottish borders on the Border Counties Rally, even though car

problems prevented a strong result.

"It proved we had good pace outside of Wales," said Hirst. "We had three punctures on the Plains but it was a good result for us and the Welsh Championship."

Hirst will miss the next BTRDA round, Saturday's Kielder Forest Stages, while co-driver Declan Dear gets married, but will resume his Welsh and BTRDA championship bids on the Nicky Grist Stages on July 9.



Hirst is zeroing in on the Welsh title

EDWARDS RETURNS TO RALLY2 FOR DONEGAL

British Rally champion Matt Edwards will make his first Rally2 start of the season on this weekend's Donegal Rally, competing in a Citroen C3.

The car belongs to Darren Gass and was a last-minute deal as Edwards' original plan to use a Volkswagen Polo GTI R5 fell through. Edwards has never driven a Citroen before and, although he's done two historic rallies in a Fiat this season, hasn't competed in anything four-wheel-drive since the Ulster Rally last November.

"The seed was planted a few months ago when there was a car available," Edwards told Motorsport News. "We got most of the way there with a deal but then last-minute things didn't quite work out. So then because everything was more or less in place we rang round a few other options to see what we could maybe get sorted and we've found Darren Gass's C3, so that's good. I wouldn't have minded what car it was to be honest."

On his decision to do



Edwards: Rally2 run

Donegal in particular, Edwards added: "Being over there and getting to know the people, that's the event everyone wants to win the most."

It's obviously the one to try and do and the one my co-driver David Moynihan is most keen to do again. I'm just trying to get out and do something, I'm not done yet in my book and I'm still trying to [further my career].

"I'm doing it to get out there and not drop off the radar really and if it's just not there, it's not there and if we're not going to challenge we're not, but I've put a lot of effort in to go so I'm not going to go and just coast round, I want to try and do well."

RALLY NEWS

NO MORE DVDs FOR IRISH ASPHALT EVENTS

The use of DVDs and digital links as part of the pacenote package for asphalt rallies under the jurisdiction of Motorsport Ireland is being terminated.

The decision follows a recommendation from its Rallies Commission and rubber-stamped by the Motor Sport Council and will take effect from the start of July.

The move comes after rally organisers heard the concerns of local residents about the increase in traffic, particularly on the week prior to events.

Originally, the facility was introduced for forest events but it has slowly crept into Tarmac events and while the information was previously issued during the week of the rally, it's now available up to two weeks before the events.

President of Motorsport Ireland Aiden Harper said: "Competitors need to understand that this is a practice that has crept in, it was never the intention to have this facility outside forestry events. Reducing the accessibility to such advanced information will make it a fairer process for competitors."

Harper confirmed that DVD/digital link will continue to be allowed for forest events.

"There is always a concern about illegal recce and as a governing body we will do what is needed to work with organising clubs in eliminating this practice," he added.



No DVD clues for Irish Tarmac

FLYING FORTRESS STAGES: DUKERIES MOTOR CLUB BY PETER SCHERER

JUNE 12

RENSHAW OVERCOMES CHICANE PENALTY FOR FLYING VICTORY

Scott Renshaw and Chris Bullock overcame a 30-second penalty to win the Grafton Underwood event in their Subaru Impreza.

Renshaw managed to build a 54s lead over the first three stages, until the penalty for hitting a chicane was applied on SS4.

David McMullan/Marc Melhuish (Mitsubishi Lancer E6) had only been fifth best on the opening stage, but after the second he was only eight seconds off David Longfellow/Danny Ward (Lancer E9), after they were handed a 30s short cut penalty.

Only one second split second and third after stage three, but McMullan had gained the place and when Renshaw picked up his penalty too. They went into the final two stages 30s apart but McMullan was quickest on both runs and at the finish the gap was drastically reduced to 10s, but it was Renshaw's win.

Longfellow and Dave Hornbrook/Ann Forster (Lancer E4) held third and fourth from stage three, but with Wayne and Archie Larbalestier retiring their E3 after four stages David Wood/Tom Murphy (Lancer)

settled in fifth.

Ryan Fagan/Jordon Joines had overcome a 1m 30s jump-start and short-cut penalty to climb to sixth with the Class 4 lead, but were out of the running after four stages and with Steve and Sophie Black's Suzuki Swift vacating seventh and the Class 1 lead too, Dan Petrie/Matt Wood (Peugeot 106 GTi) completed the top six and sealed the Class 2 win as well.

Peter Robinson/Richard Wood (Subaru Impreza) was seventh, with Class 3 victors Andrew and Joe Hutchinson's Renault Clio eighth.

Results

Organiser: Dukeries MC When: June 12 Where: Grafton Underwood Stages: 6 Championships: Clubman Motorsport EMAMC, Alpha Concrete ANEMMC, Marsh/Bluefin Sport, HCR Mini Sport Cup. Starters: 68. 1 Scott Renshaw/Chris Bullock (Subaru Impreza) 1h02m26s; 2 David McMullan/Marc Melhuish (Mitsubishi Lancer E6) +10s; 3 David Longfellow/Danny Ward (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); 4 Dave Hornbrook/Ann Forster (Mitsubishi Lancer E4); 5 David Wood/Tom Murphy (Mitsubishi Lancer); 6 Dan Petrie/Matt Wood (Peugeot 106 GTi); 7 Peter Robinson/Richard Wood (Subaru Impreza); 8 Andrew Hutchinson/Joe Hutchinson (Renault Clio); 9 Clive Hitchman/Jeremy Griffiths (BMW E36); 10 Peter/Jemma Outram (Ford Escort MK2). Class winners: Ian Bass/Charlie Mathewson (Toyota Yaris); Clive King/Anton Bird (Mini Cooper S); Petrie/Wood; Hutchinson/Hutchinson; Hitchman/Griffiths.



Renshaw took a narrow win in his Impreza



Photos: Kevin Money, Martin Walsh

ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

RETCHLESS DOMINATES YORKSHIRE TARGA

Steve Retchless and Sam Wainwright came home over a minute and a half ahead of the field on the Rallye East Yorkshire after leading from start to finish.

The two-day Targa event based at Sledmere House included 25 tests, mostly on gravel.

Retchless/Wainwright had planned to make a steady start as this was the navigator's first event in five years. However they were fastest on the opening test and were never headed. The Escort crew did benefit from running first on the road in dusty conditions. They slackened the pace over the last three tests to conserve the car, but still finished with a comfortable victory margin.

Phil Burton/Alex Lee had run in third place for much of the event but managed to move up to second on test 21 and pulled out a 30-second cushion over the final five tests to secure the runner-up spot.

There was a tight battle for third position as Miles Gleave/Jem Dale beat Andrew Smith/Brian Smith by two seconds on the final test to finish one second ahead in the final standings.

Regular Targa frontrunners Ali Procter/Lynsey Procter found the going a bit fast and rough for their 205 and a disputed test maximum meant that they finished in 14th place.

Ian Mills

Results

Rallye East Yorkshire
Organiser: Yorkshire Wolds Motor Club When: June 4-5 Where: Yorkshire Wolds Championships: NESCR Tests: 26 Starters: 54. 1 Steve Retchless/Sam Wainwright (Ford Escort) 1m01m35s; 2 Phil Burton/Alex Lee (Proton Satria) +1m32s; 3 Miles Gleave/Jem Dale (Peugeot 205); 4 Andrew Smith/Brian Smith (Ford Escort RS2000); 5 David Pedley/Grace Pedley (Mazda MX-5); 6 Neil Raven/Claire Raven (Peugeot 205 GTi); 7 Matthew Hewitt/Dan Sedgewick (Proton Satria); 8 Adrian Green/Ian Gibbons (Proton Satria); 9 Paul Turton/John Turton (MG ZR 160); 10 Kevin Hardwick/David Bennett (Peugeot 205). Class winners: Novices: Mark Basham/Rich Stones (Ford Escort).

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SPORTING SCENE NEWS

FORMULA 2 HERO BILL BATTEN PASSES AWAY

West Country Formula 2 star Bill Batten, who died recently, was one of the most decorated drivers in short-oval sport.

A carpenter by trade, Batten began his F2 career in 1960 in a mechanics' race but went on to win the World Championship in 1977. After years of frustration, he finally won the gold roof again in 1981 and 1982 before quitting the sport, claiming he lacked true opposition.

He returned in 1989, claiming the European and British titles and, aged 57, won the World again, this time at Barford. With three World titles, six British, the European and English Open among his success, Batten was the King of the Formula and held his own when the next generation, headed by Rob Speak, arrived on the scene. He also served as chairman of the British Stock Car Drivers' Association for F2 as well as sampling BriSCA F1 racing on a few occasions.

ERIKSSONS SIGN UP FOR NITRO RALLYCROSS ASSAULT

Swedish brothers Kevin and Oliver Eriksson will drive for their family Olsbergs MSE team in the Nitro Rallycross Championship's Group E category this year in the spaceframe FC1-X machines.

World Rallycross race-winner Kevin Eriksson has acted as main development driver for the new car, developed between the Swedish team and Spanish QE Technologies.

Both drivers raced in Nitro RX last season and won a round each of the RallyX Nordic season-opener in the Supercar Lites class.

Kevin Eriksson said: "The field of drivers for this season is really stacked, with great drivers from a wide variety of disciplines. The tracks in Nitro RX are what I really fell in love with during last year's campaign – I'm having so much fun racing again."

"I had the pace to win races last year and this year I'm coming in fresh with good self-confidence from the first practice at Lydden Hill."

The season kicks off at the Kent circuit on June 18-19.

DOUNE POINTS BONANZA FOR BRITISH HILLCLIMB CONTENDERS

Bumper weekend North of the border could have dramatic title destination

By Paul Lawrence

The second quadruple header in this year's British Hillclimb Championship will be at Doune in Scotland this weekend.

Alex Summers and Wallace Menzies will go to the hill near Stirling split by just two points and know the annual visit to Doune could be critical to the title race as four run-offs will be held over the weekend, with a maximum of 44 points available.

The Doune weekend will form rounds 13 to 16 of 30 in this year's championship and after 12 rounds there is precious little to choose between Summers (DJ Firestorm) and Menzies (Gould GR59), while Scott Moran (Gould GR59) is only eight points back in third.

Summers says that the Scottish trip is an

important event in the title race. "Doune is another massive challenge and it's hard on the crews and it's hard on the cars. It's hard on the drivers mentally," he explained.

If a driver qualifies for all four run-offs, he will take 12 runs up the hill in two days.

Summers added: "It's an intense weekend with a long journey; it's like the journey that Wallace does every weekend! You need a reliable car and these double-headers punish you if your car's not reliable."

Though Doune is the local venue for Alloa-based Menzies, he says there is no home advantage.

The second-placed racer said: "It's another big weekend and I'm looking forward to it. But they are all the same, whether you are at home or not. It could be 44 points and so it's all there. We've just got to get to the top."

Photos: Ben Lawrence, Colin Casserley, Ant Jenkins, mkpics.net



Menzies knows that his 'home' event will be vital

NATIONAL HOT ROD STARS GATHER TO CELEBRATE 50TH WORLD FINAL



The World Final will be played out in front of the stars this year

A special celebration of every surviving National Hot Rod World Final winner will take place at this year's event on July 2-3, which marks the 50th running of the event.

The World Final first took place in 1972 and has only missed one year in 2020 due to the Covid pandemic. To celebrate the landmark race at Foxhall Heath, organiser

Spedeworth has invited all the champions and fans will get the chance to meet their heroes with a special autograph session, which will take place on the short oval in the build-up to the 75-lap showpiece.

Spedeworth boss Deane Wood said: "This will be a great way for us to celebrate the history of the event and give something back to the

fans too. Unfortunately, the first winner, Bob Howe, is too ill to come but all the other winners will be coming along to meet the fans and add to the anniversary.

"Spectators will be allowed onto the circuit in the build-up to the main event and will get the chance to greet their heroes. It will be something unique."

BRISCA F1: OWLERTON, SHEFFIELD BY COLIN CASSERLEY

JUNE 12

LUND ROLLS BACK THE YEARS AS HE INHERITS SHEFFIELD FINAL VICTORY

Stockcar legend John Lund's wait for his 223rd BriSCA F1 final win ended when he picked up the glory at Sheffield on Sunday although he crossed the line in second place.

Joff Gibson, who was first past the post, was docked two places for jumping a late-race restart. Lund last won a final just over 12 years ago at King's Lynn in May 2010 and his very first final win came back in 1976 at Rochdale.

Gibson took the early lead and opened up a sizable gap over the rest of the field. Behind him, Ashley England moved through the pack to take second place

with Lund in third. Karl Hawkins battled hard with Lund for third giving the veteran driver a couple of big hits but Lund held his line and Hawkins lost ground as the race progressed.

A multi-car pile-up with five laps remaining brought out the yellow flag and bunched the field. On the restart, Gibson quickly pulled away from England. Then, on the final lap, Lund punted England wide. It was a move that would ultimately give him victory.

A delighted Lund said: "I last won years and years ago and never expected to take another. I am very chuffed with

that. I got a few hits early on but managed to hold my position."

Second-placed man England was pleased with his second-place finish. He said: "I saw Lund closing in and I was just hoping he would not hit me hard enough to put me in the fence. It was a fair hit though and gave me chance to finish the race."

Understandably, first-across-the-line Gibson was not happy about being docked. He explained: "The batteries went in my receiver [race control-to-driver radio]. I could not hear when the green was being dropped. But I did go a bit early so probably did jump the



Lund (53) was a winner again

restart. If there is any consolation, at least it gave the win to Lund..."

Results

Organisers YorStox, BriSCA F1 When: June 12 Where: Owlerton Stadium, Sheffield, Yorkshire Starters: 37 1 John Lund; 2 Ashley England; 3 Joff Gibson; 4 Karl Hawkins; 5 Frankie Wainman; 6 Lee Fairhurst; 7 Mark Sargent; 8 Mat Newson; 9 Bobby Griffin; 10 Mal Brown.

BRISCA F2 ROUND-UP

Moodie takes yet more F2 silverware in Northern Ireland



Guinchard: Mildenhall victor

Two men dominated the weekend's BriSCA Formula 2 honours as Charlie Guinchard took a double on shale and Gordon Moodie did likewise on a trip to Northern Ireland.

racers from mainland Britain crossed the Irish Sea to compete at Nutts Corner for the BriSCA F2 Challenge Trophy and Irish Open championship. Scotsman Moodie took both titles in a dominant display from the decorated driver.

In Saturday night's Challenge Trophy, Moodie led from pole position while outside front-row starter Chris Burgoine was turned around, causing chaos as Moodie and Jonathan Hadfield escaped. Hadfield was pushed back down the order as Billy Finnegan – who returned from Australia for the event – came through to second, with James Rygor third. Moodie and Finnegan repeated their results in Sunday's

Irish Open, as Liam Rennie improved to third. At Mildenhall, Guinchard passed chief rival Dave Polley early on, then took the lead from Stuart Sculthorpe on half-distance after a couple of stoppages. Polley followed in his wake but was not close enough to challenge. Guinchard hunted down Reece Cox to win at Sheffield, taking advantage of a mistake from the Wisbech racer to move ahead in

another action-packed race. Cox held onto second with Michael Lund third.

Mark Paulson

Results
Organiser: Spedeworth When: June 11 Where: Mildenhall Stadium Starters: 28 1 Charlie Guinchard; 2 Dave Polley; 3 Harley Thackra; 4 Reece Cox; 5 Charley Tomblin; 6 Marcus Gilbert; 7 Scott Aldridge; 8 Josh Wilson; 9 other finishers.

Organiser: Nutts Corner Raceway When: June 11 Where: Nutts Corner Raceway Starters: 28 1 Gordon Moodie; 2 Billy Finnegan; 3 James Rygor;

4 Euan Millar; 5 Aaron Vaight; 6 Aidan McFerran; 7 Stephen Forster; 8 Steven Burgoine; 9 Jonathan Hadfield; 10 Jason Blacklock.

Organiser: Nutts Corner Raceway When: June 12 Where: Nutts Corner Raceway Starters: 22 1 Gordon Moodie; 2 Billy Finnegan; 3 Liam Rennie; 4 Jack Cave; 5 James Rygor; 6 Jonathan Hadfield; 7 Shea Fegan; 8 Aaron Vaight; 9 Jamie Jones; 10 Steven Burgoine.

Organiser: YorStox When: June 12 Where: Owlerton Stadium, Sheffield Starters: 20 1 Charlie Guinchard; 2 Reece Cox; 3 Michael Lund; 4 Charley Tomblin; 5 Daz Shaw; 6 Luke Woodhull; 7 Michael Wallbank; 8 Kyle Taylor; 9 Harley Thackra; 10 Rob Mitchell.

HISTORICS

DOWN THE WORKSHOP JAGUAR D-TYPE

Current owner: Ben Eastick



Eastick loves the D-type

He's had it since 1994

"In the 1990s we decided to assemble enough original parts including engine, gearbox, back axle and brakes to build a car exactly as it was at Le Mans in 1955. Twenty eight years later I still get excited at the beginning of the season. We've raced it every year in at least eight or nine events. It's not a museum piece but sadly, some of the D-types are becoming collectibles."

It's a strong car

"Funnily enough, we found a crack in the tub in the winter. We haven't had the tail off for about five years and we found a crack in the tub. But you know, it was built to last 24 hours, not 27 seasons, so it's not done bad."

He won't part with it

"I love it and it's like an old pair of slippers. You know, I can jump into it after six months and within five or six laps, be on the pace again. It's wonderful. And I think it's part of me, it's something that's part of my life. It's part of my spirit. There's a few of us, like me and Gary Pearson, that would never part with them."

He loves racing it at Thruxton

"Thruxton in a D-type is mega. It's even better than Goodwood if I'm honest. It flows and it suits the D-type, especially through Church. That's one hell of a corner in the D-type. Thruxton sorts out the men from the boys, doesn't it? It's a special place and we get our legs. It is massively rewarding. But you've got to go into your inner self at Thruxton before you get in the car. You've got to think about it. I mean, Donington or Silverstone you jump in, you just go but at Thruxton you really need to think about what you're doing."

He shares it with legend Karl Jones

"Karl and I have finished twice second in the Woodcote Trophy at Thruxton. We never got the wins. So that's on the wish list. But I think it's a bit of a hard call these days to be honest. Karl's a character. He's a lovely chap, one of the nicest guys in motorsport. Neil Cunningham was the same, I have to say."



FARRELL RETURNS TO THE TRACK IN FORMULA FORD 2000 IN REYNARD

Expat Australian engineer makes a race comeback after four decades away

By Paul Lawrence

Almost 40 years after he raced in Formula Ford 2000 in period expatriate Australian Steve Farrell returned to the category at Cadwell Park

"This is my comeback," said Farrell, a former Reynard employee who is normally a British Touring Car Championship chief engineer for Ciceley Motorsport. In FF2000, he will now contest selected races in a Reynard SF79.

"I did one race in 2006 in a Van Diemen but, other than that, I've not raced since the end of 1983 when I competed in Formula Ford 2000 in a Van Diemen RF82."

Farrell first came to the United Kingdom in 1977 to work as a mechanic for his brother Chris who was racing in the British



Farrell is true Anglophile

Formula 3 Championship.

Farrell then returned to the UK in 1983 to race but ended the FF2000 season with no money and a broken hand. After a short return to Australia, he decided to come back to the UK and settled here.



Ciceley man will race his Reynard SF79

"I love England and I'm fully anglicised," he said. "I'm even a monarchist," he added over the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend.

"I worked with Adrian Reynard at one time and I saw that he was doing Formula Ford 2000. I thought that if he can do it,

then there's hope for me."

His racing will have to fit around his BTCC schedule and his return race meeting at Cadwell Park was also his first time in the car and his first visit to the Lincolnshire circuit. "It's a hell of a place," he said of the challenging track.



Castaldini has been out of the cockpit for 14 seasons

CASTALDINI MAKES A COMEBACK WITH DAVRIAN TRACK OUTING

Myles Castaldini raced at Cadwell Park for the first time in 14 years, when he ran his Davrian Mk8 in the inaugural Historic ModSports race.

"It started as a rally car with a Rover V8 engine," said Castaldini, who has owned the car for 15 years. "It generally races only once a year at the Walter Hayes Trophy but is ideally suited to the new Historic ModSports category. After the Rover V8, it

was converted to a Ford crossflow engine. It's great fun to drive," said Castaldini, who races a single-seater Speads RM8 in Monoposto events and sometimes shares the Jaguar E-type raced by his father Paul.

Castaldini won both pilot races at Cadwell and reckons that several more Davrians could join the Historic ModSports grid later this year and into next season.

Harris calls time on racing – for now

Having recently become a mum, Abbey Harris had what she thinks will be her last race for the foreseeable future at Cadwell Park in her Historic Formula Ford 2000 Royale RP30.

Abbey and her partner Lee Bankhurst each have an RP30 but they now plan to concentrate on Lee's racing since the arrival of daughter Maggie six months ago. Harris had not raced for 18 months before appearing for what may be a final outing at her local Cadwell circuit, while her mum Sally was on hand to look after Maggie. "I'll probably go back to horses and Lee will take over my Royale now," said Abbey.

Gareth Hurford-Jones and Richard Goring ran the Group A car at Down Ampney but were sidelined on the second stage

RARE ESCORT MAKES RALLY STAGE RETURN



Escort returned at Down Ampney

An original factory-built Ford Escort Cosworth returned to rallying last month after eight years out of competition.

Gareth Hurford-Jones and Richard Goring ran the Group A car at Down Ampney but were sidelined on the second stage

with a detached oil pipe.

"It is an ex-works Group A shell from 1991 and it's not been used for eight years," said Hurford-Jones. "We were going to come back out sooner and then Covid got in the way." His company sponsors the

EMCOS event at Down Ampney so he decided to compete in case it was the last rally at the Gloucestershire venue. "It was used in Belgium in period and we're planning to take it back there later this year," said Hurford-Jones.

IN BRIEF

Formula Junior absentees

Missing from the Formula Junior grid at Cadwell Park, after dramas in Friday testing, were Syd Fraser and Clive Richards. Aberdeen-based Fraser was tagged by a Formula Ford 2000 and went off at Hall Bends in his Lotus 20/22, while Richards was absent after engine problems developed in testing in his Lotus 22.

Bumper Donegal

A total of 26 historic crews, along with eight reserves, are on the stellar entry list for this weekend's Donegal Rally. Heading the historic field will be the Ford Escort Mk2 of Irish crew Martin and Darragh Doherty and those leading the chase include Ryan Barrett (Northern Ireland) and Welsh ace Meirion Evans. Andy Johnson's Vauxhall Chevette is the leading non-Ford Escort at number 11.

Grant's ruled out

Callum Grant was missing from the Historic Formula Ford grid at Cadwell Park after he discovered a crack in the chassis of his Merlin Mk20 after testing on Friday. Though they may have been able to repair it at the circuit, the Grant team elected to take the car home and do a full repair in order that the car is back in top condition for the next races at Donington Park this weekend.

Kivlochan's dramas

Kevin Kivlochan had a mixed weekend at Cadwell Park, starting in Historic Road Sports qualifying on Saturday when his AC Cobra went off at the hairpin and was too badly damaged to continue. Meanwhile, he was back in 70s Road Sports to claim a top-five finish in his Morgan +8, now with a fresh John Eales engine after the previous unit was destroyed at Brands Hatch in early April.

MCC's trialling event

A three-day June 24-26 classic trial will mark the 120th anniversary of the Motor Cycling Club. Around 100 competitors will tackle the one-off event, which will start and finish in Nailsworth in Gloucestershire and cover classic trials hills in the southwest within a total route of over 500 miles. Each year the MCC organises the three biggest classic trials in the UK, the Exeter, Land's End and Edinburgh trials.

Barter's return

Julian Barter made a winning return to 70s Road Sports at Cadwell Park, almost a year after a blown engine sidelined his TVR 3000M at Donington Park. "We've been waiting for piston rings since Christmas," said Barter, who joined his father Charles on the 70s grid. "I just love Cadwell but I didn't get any testing," he said of the championship-winning car.

F3's packed out

A fabulous field of 30 one-litre Formula 3 cars will gather at Donington Park this weekend as the regular UK racers are joined by a contingent from mainland Europe. Heading the entry is young Samuel Harrison in the Chevron B15 he took to Snetterton victory in April.

COLUMNIST

ALEX FORES



The clubman turned GB3 podium finisher is getting new opportunities in 2022

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



Fores was on the Praga pace



Fores got driver of the day for his Sunday show

My racing career has gone in a new direction in 2022. I got the chance to compete in Steve Lansley's Caterham in Castle Combe's GT championship at this year's season opener.

I'd only driven the car for a handful of laps before going straight into qualifying. Being a new car I just wanted to take time to adapt and see what the quirks of it were. But I hit the ground running: my fastest lap in qualifying was my fastest of the whole weekend.

It was a really powerful car, and quick and lively around a track like Combe; it felt like you had to be on top of everything. But it was a rewarding combination of track and car to get right to set a lap like we did and we got on with that, worked on set-up and it all seemed sweet right from the start.

Going from a single-seater in GB3 to a car like

a Caterham you've got a lot more body roll, you've got to manage the weight and deliver the power in a lot more aggressive manner with the lower grip, so that was a big challenge but it felt fun.

My qualifying lap time was under the lap record by quite a way for the class and was the fastest a Caterham has ever been around Combe, which is a good stat to have and it's now on the CV! I then won both races by a convincing margin, setting a lap record in each, so I couldn't ask for more.

And the Combe outing is preparation for me sharing the car with Lansley at Classic Sports Car Club's Magnificent Sevens race at Combe next month.

Then this month I got an opportunity to race in Praga Cup at Silverstone. That came from the Hyperevo and iAbra companies, they contacted me the week before looking to do some development with the Pragas. They wanted to get me in the car so I was paired with Jem Hepworth at Idola Motorsport.

It was a different challenge again, which is refreshing to keep sharp and trying my hand at different things, and straight away we were right on the pace.

We had some technical issues in race one and changed car from Saturday to Sunday for race two. Sunday's qualifying was my first time in the car in the wet, and we treated it as a bit of a test session and qualified eighth.

Then in the race we were the fastest car on track for the whole of my stint, I gelled well with the car in the wet, and I had an entertaining battle with Ben Collins. We finished fifth, but realistically third or even



Fores has been setting records in a Caterham

second would have been on the cards had we started higher.

I got fastest lap and the driver of the day award, which was a really good sign of how well we went and it was really rewarding to see that my efforts had been noticed.

The Praga is a high-aero car so it's got a bit of the Formula 3-level car such as in GB3 but it's got a little bit less mechanical grip than the F3 car so in that sense it's a bit more like a Formula Ford. So it felt like a hybrid of the two, requiring a more hustling driving style. It made for a good fun car to drive and it has a lot of power.

These Praga races were the first two-driver races I have ever taken part in and that was a new challenge again. I had no problem with the driver changes and everything seemed smooth. I found it rewarding working with Jem as a pairing, and it was also interesting to be in a longer race whereas in F3 there are limited overtakes after the first lap.

Pro-Am competition is an avenue that I want to go down so the fact that we've now got more experience in that and were competitive shows that it's the right way to go for me. I've showed that I can compete and do my part of it which is what we're trying to showcase at the moment so hopefully we'll just continue that trend with more races to come.

I'm just playing it by ear and keeping working to make deals and meet people that I could potentially race with. Keeping active is only going to help build my CV and keep my name live so the more good performances I put in can only help.

"I was the fastest car on track for the whole of my stint"

LE MANS 24 HOURS REPORT

TOYOTA KEEPS THE WINNING HABIT FOR FIFTH LE MANS

It took the Japanese firm ages to win its first French classic – now it can't stop succeeding. By **Sam Smith**



Trouble-free: Winning
GR010 Toyota prevailed



Winners Buemi, Hirakawa and Hartley celebrate on the podium

Toyota achieved a fifth-consecutive Le Mans victory to its recent streak of success at La Sarthe as it took another 1-2, adding to its similar formation finishes in 2018, 2019 and 2021.

The #8 Toyota GR010 Hybrid Hypercar driven by Sebastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Ryo Hirakawa were in a close battle with the sister #7 car of Jose Maria Lopez, Mike Conway and Kamui Kobayashi for much of the day-night-day race but were ultimately able to take advantage of a technical issue suffered by Lopez just before 0800hrs on Sunday.

Lopez stopped at Arnage and was forced to perform a reset on the car's front hybrid system. Toyota had experienced similar issues during running in the World Endurance Championship this season and were prepared for such episodes heading into the race.

This allowed Hartley to take track position and, after an unscheduled precautionary check for the #7 machine, the Kiwi stretched out the lead to a whole lap. From there on, the win was never in doubt, despite Kobayashi able to get back on the lead lap just before noon on Sunday.

Prior to that, Toyota had flexed its muscles in the Hyperpole session on Thursday evening with Hartley claiming his first-ever pole lap with a time of 3m24.408s to just outpace Kobayashi,

the acknowledged Le Mans qualifying master, by a mere 0.177s.

Hartley's team-mate Buemi led for most of the opening hour but started to struggle with oversteer which allowed the #7 Toyota GR010 Hybrid Hypercar driven by Conway to slip past. The battle between the two Toyotas ebbed and flowed until the early morning with either taking turns in the lead.

Hirakawa led for the #8 crew at mid-distance but, by sunrise, Conway had got back in front and was able to pull out a small gap. Shortly after this, Lopez suffered his ultimately race-defining shutdown.

The Cologne-based team had gone into Le Mans week with some reliability concerns after a hybrid failure for the #8 car at the 6 Hours of Spa in May necessitated a long evaluation period and a two-day test at the same venue just ahead of departing for Le Mans.

Those fears largely didn't come to

pass, and the #8 crew's only concerns were a couple of sluggish pitstops and a brief stomach bug for Buemi, which meant the team had to shuffle its stints slightly in the closing stages of the race.

By that time the job was done with the #7's reset issues effectively costing it a lap, although Kobayashi was able to get back on the lead lap and Lopez set the fastest lap of the race, 3m27.749s, in the final hour as they never gave up the chase.

Hartley crossed the finish line 2m01.222s ahead of the sister Toyota to ensure that he took a third La Sarthe victory, while Buemi wrapped up a fourth victory and team newcomer for 2022, Hirakawa, claimed a maiden triumph.

Toyota's win marked the first time an official factory entity had won five straight wins since the works Ferrari team took five straight victories at Le Mans between 1960 and 1964.

"To win five Le Mans in a row is

Glickenhaus got to the flag in third



LMP2

Jota racks up a triple with LMP2 glory

Kent-based Jota took a conclusive victory in the ultra-competitive LMP2 class adding the 2022 crown that the ones it accrued in 2014 and 2017.

Antonio Felix da Costa, Will Stevens and Roberto Gonzalez dominated proceedings and led the vast majority of the race, exercising a combination of raw pace from da Costa and Stevens with consolidation of favourable slow-zone yellow flag periods.

The #38 car was never seriously challenged and was able to control the class and ward off an initial threat from the Prema entry of Louis Deletraz, Lorenzo Colombo

and Robert Kubica.

The team's only concern came in the final hours with a delaminated tyre. That apart, its Oreca-Gibson LMP2 car ran faultlessly and rewarded the trio with a popular victory.

Jota celebrated a 1-3 result as its other entry for South African Jonathan Aberdein, Ed Jones and young Danish charger Oliver Rasmussen secured third behind the Prema car.

The polesitting reigning Le Mans LMP2-winning car from highly-decorated Belgian team, WRT, had a fraught race. This began with one of its drivers, Rene Rast, being

adjudged to have triggered a first-corner accident that caused United Autosports' USA driver Will Owen to spear off into the gravel within seconds of the start.

Despite a fine recovery drive, which helped it to reach third position in the class by morning, Robin Frijns ended the race in the Indianapolis guardrail, triggering the only safety car of the entire race.

The Algarve Pro Racing car of Steven Thomas, Rene Binder and James Allen headed the Pro/Am-categorised LMP2 entries home from the Nielsen Racing entry of Ben Hanley, Rodrigo Sales and Matt Bell.



Briton Stevens and da Costa did the hard yards

something very special," Buemi told Motorsport News. "Everyone knows that we came so close for so many years, and in a way this success kind of feels like it heals some of those pains.

"The team were fantastic all week here and we had very few issues. The racing with the other car was all genuine and we had no directions. It was a nice fight."

While Toyota's victory was conclusive, it was again achieved against the backdrop of minimal genuine competition as Glickenhaus Racing with two of its striking 007LMH cars and a single Alpine Team were the only other entrants in the nascent Hypercar category.

Glickenhaus again proved to be quick and reliable, although ultimately not able to lay a genuine glove on Toyota in race trim.

The #708 machine, driven Olivier Pla, Pipo Derani and Romain Dumas, was initially the better placed of the pair but when Pla rotated at Tertre Rouge and glanced the barriers just before midnight,

"This win feels like it heals some of the pain"

Sebastien Buemi

its chances of a podium effectively died.

This allowed Richard Westbrook, Franck Mailleux and Ryan Briscoe, in the #709, to be promoted into the final podium slot despite having lost 11 minutes early in the race when it made an unscheduled pitstop to change a sensor.

Alpine flattered to deceive in qualifying as Nicolas Lapierre was the only driver to threaten a Toyota front-row lock-out. He got to within 0.022s of the #7 Toyota but that was the highlight for the modified Rebellion LMP1 chassis.

In the race, it lost chunks of time in the pits. The first was for clutch repairs and faulty ignition, and then to complete repairs after a sizeable accident triggered by Matthieu Vaxiviere at the Porsche Curves.

Alpine has been the centre point of the latest Balance of Performance activity right up until the start of the race.

Its Gibson V8 engine was slapped with a 13bhp power reduction a day before the race. This came after it was initially given a 9bhp boost after the car appeared to be lacking in straightline speed in the pre-race test and then in the first practice and qualifying session held on Wednesday.

Last week's Le Mans was the first event since 2019 to be held without any pandemic procedures on-site and fully open to the public. A reported crowd close to 240,000 was confirmed by the ACO for the 90th running of the race.

GT CLASSES

Porsche capitalises on Chevy's nightmare

Gianmaria Bruni, Frederic Makowiecki and Richard Lietz took a surprise LMGTE Pro victory after Porsche gratefully picked up the pieces from a catastrophic series of events that wiped out the Corvette Racing team.

Nick Tandy had secured a brilliant pole position for the #64 Chevy Corvette he shared with Alexander Sims and Tommy Milner, and the car was well placed in the Sunday breakfast hours when it was unceremoniously removed from the race by an errant AF Corse LMP2 car.

Francois Perrodo made a sudden move in traffic on the Mulsanne Straight and turned Sims sharp left into the wall and instant retirement. The French driver was handed a three-minute stop-go penalty

for the incident. This came after the #63 Corvette of Antonio Garcia, Jordan Taylor and Nicky Catsburg had also led the class early on, only to be thwarted by a broken rear suspension.

This initially left the #92 Porsche GT Team trio of Kevin Estre, Michael Christensen and Laurens Vanthoor out front. But when Christensen suffered damage in an incident and dropped down the order to an eventual fourth, it was the sister Porsche of Makowiecki, Lietz and Bruni left with a clear run to the flag.

They took glory despite some pressure from the #51 AF Corse Ferrari of James Calado, Alessandro Pier Guidi and Daniel Serra which used some improved pace in cooler conditions to claim second in LMGTE Pro.



Bruni, Makowiecki and Lietz came out on top

But the Prancing Horse was unable to muster sufficient pace over the whole week to make a genuine victory charge, instead taking consolation in a 2-3 result, as the #52 car of Miguel Molina, Antonio Fuoco and Davide Rigon fought back from a puncture to round out the podium.

In the LMGTE Am category,

the British TF Sport squad celebrated a hard-won victory to reprise its 2020 success. It did so with Ben Keating, Marco Sorsensen and Henrique Chaves.

It was a pleasing win for Keating, who won a class at Le Mans at his eighth attempt, and banished the memory of losing victory through disqualification in 2019.

RESULTS

The 90th Le Mans 24 Hours

La Sarthe

POS	CAT	DRIVERS	TEAM	LAPS
1	Hypercar	Sebastien Buemi/Brendon Hartley/Ryo Hirakawa	Toyota Gazoo Racing Toyota GR010-Hybrid	380 laps
2	Hypercar	Mike Conway/Kamui Kobayashi/Jose Maria Lopez	Toyota Gazoo Racing Toyota GR010-Hybrid	380 laps
3	Hypercar	Ryan Briscoe/Richard Westbrook/Franck Mailleux	Glickenhaus Racing Glickenhaus 007 LMH	375 laps
4	Hypercar	Oliver Pla/Romain Dumas/Felipe Derani	Glickenhaus Racing Glickenhaus 007 LMH	370 laps
5	LMP2	Roberto Gonzalez/Antonio Felix da Costa/William Stevens	Jota Oreca 07-Gibson	369 laps
6	LMP2	Robert Kubica/Louis Deletraz/Lorenzo Colombo	Prema Orlen Racing Oreca 07-Gibson	369 laps
7	LMP2	Oliver Rasmussen/Edward Jones/Jonathan Aberdein	Jota Oreca 07-Gibson	368 laps
8	LMP2	Nyck de Vries/Mathias Beche/Tijmen van der Helm	TDS Racing x Vallante Racing Oreca 07-Gibson	368 laps
9	LMP2	Dane Cameron/Emmanuel Collard/Felipe Nasr	Team Penske Oreca 07-Gibson	368 laps
10	LMP2	Alexander Lynn/Oliver Jarvis/Joshua Pierson	United Autosports Oreca 07-Gibson	368 laps
11	LMP2	Yifei Ye/Ricky Taylor/Niklas Kruettner	Cool Racing Oreca 07-Gibson	367 laps
12	LMP2	Paul Lafforgue/Paul Loup Chatin/Patrick Pilet	Idem Sport Oreca 07-Gibson	366 laps
13	LMP2	Lilou Wadoux/Sébastien Ogier/Charles Milesi	Richard Mille Racing Oreca 07-Gibson	366 laps
14	LMP2	Philip Hanson/Filipe Albuquerque/William Owen	United Autosports Oreca 07-Gibson	366 laps
15	LMP2	Rolf Ineichen/Mirko Bortolotti/Dries Vanthoor	WRT Oreca 07-Gibson	366 laps
16	LMP2	Julien Canal/Nicolas Jamin/Job Van Uitert	Panis Racing Oreca 07-Gibson	366 laps
17	LMP2	Jakub Smiechowski/Alex Brundle/Esteban Gutierrez	Inter Europol Competition Oreca 07-Gibson	365 laps
18	LMP2	David Heinemeier-Hansson/Fabio Scherer/Pietro Fittipaldi	Inter Europol Competition Oreca 07-Gibson	364 laps
19	LMP2 Pro/Am	Steven Thomas/James Allen/Rene Binder	Algarve Pro Oreca 07-Gibson	363 laps
20	LMP2 Pro/Am	Rodrigo Sales/Matt Bell/Ben Hanley	Nielsen Racing Oreca 07-Gibson	362 laps
21	LMP2	Rui Andrade/Ferdinand Habitus-Lothringen/Norman Nato	Realteam by WRT Oreca 07-Gibson	362 laps
22	LMP2 Pro/Am	Laurens Horst/Jean-Clairout/Alexandre Cougnaud	DKR Engineering Oreca 07-Gibson	362 laps
23	Hypercar	Andre Negrao/Nicolas Lapierre/Matthieu Vaxiviere	Alpine Elf Team Alpine A480-Gibson	362 laps
24	LMP2 Pro/Am	François Perrodo/Nicklas Nielsen/Alessio Rovera	AF Corse Racing Oreca 07-Gibson	361 laps
25	LMP2 Pro/Am	Sophia Florsch/John Falb/Jack Aitken	Algarve Racing Oreca 07-Gibson	361 laps
26	LMP2 Pro/Am	Miroslav Konopka/Bent Viscaal/Tristan Vautier	ARC Bratislava Oreca 07-Gibson	360 laps
27	LMP2	Nico Müller/Ryan Cullen/Sébastien Bourdais	Vector Sport Oreca 07-Gibson	357 laps
28	GTE Pro	Gianmaria Bruni/Richard Lietz/Frédéric Makowiecki	Porsche 911 RSR-19	350 laps
29	GTE Pro	Alessandro Pier Guidi/James Calado/Daniel Serra	AF Corse Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	350 laps
30	GTE Pro	Miguel Molina/Antonio Fuoco/Davide Rigon	AF Corse Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	349 laps
31	GTE Pro	Michael Christensen/Kevin Estre/Laurens Vanthoor	Porsche GT Porsche 911 RSR-19	348 laps
32	GTE Pro	Felipe Fraga/Sam Bird/Shane Van Gisbergen	Riley Motorsports Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	347 laps
33	LMP2 Pro/Am	Eric Trouillet/Sébastien Page/David Droux	Graff Racing Oreca 07-Gibson	344 laps
34	GTE Am	Ben Keating/Henrique Chaves/Marco Sorsensen	TF Sport Aston Martin Vantage AMR	343 laps
35	GTE Am	Cooper MacNeil/Julien Andlauer/Thomas Merrill	Weathertech Racing Porsche 911 RSR-19	343 laps
36	GTE Am	Paul Dalla Lana/David Pittard/Nicki Thiim	Northwest AMR Aston Martin Vantage	342 laps
37	GTE Am	Michael Wainwright/Ricardo Pera/Benjamin Barker	GR Racing Porsche 911 RSR-19	340 laps
38	GTE Am	Fred Poordad/Maxwell Root/Jan Heylen	Dempsey-Proton Racing Porsche 911 RSR-19	340 laps
39	GTE Am	Thomas Flohr/Francesco Castellacci/Nicholas Cassidy	AF Corse Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	340 laps
40	GTE Am	Rahel Frey/Michelle Gatting/Sarah Bovy	Iron Dames Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	339 laps
41	GTE Am	Simon Mann/Christoph Ulrich/Toni Vilander	AF Corse Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	339 laps
42	GTE Am	Louis Prette/Conrad Grunewald/Vincent Abril	AF Corse Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	339 laps
43	GTE Am	Duncan Cameron/Matthew Griffin/David Perel	Spirit of Race Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	339 laps
44	GTE Am	Andrew Haryanto/Alessio Picariello/Martin Rump	Hardpoint Motorsport Porsche 911 RSR-19	338 laps
45	GTE Am	Takeshi Kimura/Fredrik Schandorff/Mikkel Jensen	Kessel Racing Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	336 laps
46	GTE Am	Matteo Cressoni/Giancarlo Fisichella/Richard Heistand	Iron Lynx Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	336 laps
47	GTE Am	Christian Ried/Sébastien Priaulx/Harry Tincknell	Dempsey-Proton Racing Porsche 911 RSR-19	336 laps
48	LMP2 Pro/Am	Jean-Baptiste Lahaye/Matthieu Lahaye/François Heriau	Ultimate Oreca 07-Gibson	335 laps
49	LMP2 Pro/Am	Christophe Cresp/Michael Jensen/Steven Paletta	CD Sport Ligier JS27	333 laps
50	GTE Am	Renger van der Zande/Mark Kvamme/Jason Hart	JMW Motorsport Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	331 laps
51	GTE Am	Michael Fassbender/Matt Campbell/Zacharie Robichon	Proton Competition Porsche 911 RSR-19	329 laps
52	LMP2	Richard Bradley/Guillermo Rojas/Reshad de Gerus	Duqueine Oreca 07-Gibson	326 laps
53	GTE Am	Pierre Ehret/Christian Hook/Nicolas Varrone	Iron Lynx Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	324 laps
R	GTE Pro	Claudio Schiavoni/Alessandro Balzan/Raffaele Giammaria	Iron Lynx Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	289 laps/Accident
R	LMP2	Sean Céléa/Robin Frijns/Rene Rast	WRT Oreca 07-Gibson	285 laps/Accident
R	GTE Pro	Tommy Milner/Nick Tandy/Alexander Sims	Chevrolet Racing Corvette C8.R	260 laps/Accident
R	GTE Am	Brendan Iribe/Oliver Millroy/Ben Barnicoat	Team Project 1 Porsche 911 RSR-19	241 laps/Accident
R	GTE Pro	Antonio Garcia/Jordan Taylor/Nicky Catsburg	Chevrolet Racing Corvette C8.R	214 laps/Accident/Suspension
R	GTE Am	Alexander West/Come Ledogar/Marvin Klein	Inception Racing Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	190 laps/Accident/damage
R	GTE Am	Franois Dezoteux/Pierre Ragues/Cabriel Aubry	Spirit of Race Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	127 laps/Engine
R	GTE Am	Satoshi Hoshino/Tomonobu Fujii/Charles Fagg	D'Station Racing Aston Martin Vantage	112 laps/Chassis damage
R	GTE Am	Matteo Cairoli/Mikkel Pedersen/Nicolas Leutwiler	Team Project 1 Porsche 911 RSR-19	77 laps/Accident damage

Photos: Motorsport Images, Toyota Gazoo Racing

BTCC REPORT: OULTON PARK

IN BRIEF

Jackson's penalty

Motorbase Performance Ford Focus driver Ollie Jackson has been dropped three places in the results from the final round at Thruxton in May to go from 18th across the line to 21st. An enquiry was held on Friday at Oulton Park to look into race-three contact at Thruxton between Jackson and BTC Racing Honda pilot Jade Edwards and the former was deemed responsible. Edwards retired as a result of the lap-14 incident.

Butcher's new engine

The Speedworks Motorsport team was forced into a late-nighter on Friday after a late issue was spotted with the engine of Rory Butcher's Toyota Corolla after the shakedown. The crew replaced the two-litre turbocharged motor in time for the 0945hrs opening free practice session on Saturday. The Scotsman rewarded the team with a front-row start slot after qualifying on Saturday. "It is a real credit to the team, so I am delighted to be able to reward them with second position."

Ingram's record pole

Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N driver Tom Ingram broke the qualifying lap record on Saturday afternoon to claim his first pole position of the season. The 28-year-old recorded a 1m24.468s lap (93.76mph) to head Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla man Rory Butcher. Ingram's lap beat the previous benchmark which was a 1m25.484s set by Jason Plato back in 2015. "The car was simply perfect," said Ingram. "To set a new qualifying record is the icing on the cake."

A wing and a prayer

Despite only lining up in ninth spot on the grid, four-time champion Colin Turkington (WSR BMW 330i M Sport) still heads the Goodyear Wingfoot award, which is given for the best qualifier of the year. He leads team-mate Jake Hill, who was in the wars in his MB Motosport machine. The Kent racer was sideswiped by the Hyundai of Tom Chilton as he was about to set his final flying lap. Hill lined up 15th position on the grid. Chilton was handed an official reprimand and was given two points on his race licence as a result of the incident.

Jade strikes gold

BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R driver Jade Edwards was the highest-scoring driver in the Jack Sears Trophy in race three at Oulton Park. The individual round wins went to Bobby Thompson (Team Hard Cupra), who took two and Ash Hand (Power Maxed Astra).



Edwards: Top JST runner



Ingram was in top format Oulton



Hyundai man had the highs and BTCC lows...

INGRAM DOUBLES UP BEFORE DISASTER

The Hyundai driver was the form man, but it all ended in despair. By Matt James

Roundabouts certainly aren't a feature of race tracks, and nor are swings. But the weekend's three British Touring Car Championship races at Oulton Park showed the fickle nature of success in the category.

Two dominant wins for Tom Ingram in his Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N pushed him into the joint lead of the points chase after the opening salvo in Cheshire, but a bruising third race left him spat across the grass and unable to capitalise on the building blocks he had put in place.

Stephen Jelley drove superbly from a race-three pole position to control the reversed-grid encounter all the way through in his WSR BMW 330e M Sport, but it was BTC Racing's Josh Cook who maintained his charge at the top of the table in his BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R despite only one podium in the triple-header at Oulton Park.

Race 1

Ingram was not thanking onlookers on Saturday for pointing out that he, during his previous 24 attempts at claiming a BTCC triumph at the Cheshire venue, he hadn't even managed a solitary podium finish.

He turned into the ultimate ghostbuster after 18 exemplary laps around the 2.23-mile track. The Excelr8 Motorsport driver nailed his start and there was only the brief appearance of the Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla of Rory Butcher on the outside line at Old Hall to worry about, but the concern was brief.

Once that was dealt with, Ingram scampered away to an untroubled a win as he is ever likely to have in the BTCC, even with an early safety car called for when Gordon Shedden (Team Dynamics Honda Civic) and the Ciceley Motorsport BMW 330e M Sport of Adam Morgan made contact coming out of Lodge.

By rights, the three-lap hiatus should have brought everyone else back into play.

But it didn't bother Ingram and, within three laps of the restart, he was two seconds up the road.

"It might have looked relatively simple, but there was lots to do in the cockpit," said Ingram. "I was doing all the preventative things like trying to stay off the kerbs, conserving my hybrid usage just in case I needed it and the and all the other general housekeeping things that you have to do."

"The car was just phenomenal and I am so grateful to have got rid of that tag of not having won here. I have ripped that off and thrown it in the bin."

Behind the Hyundai, Butcher was always under threat. His tyres started to deteriorate from the early stages and the safety car period was a brief respite. Once Dan Lloyd (Excelr8 Hyundai) had skittered wide at the hairpin to drop himself out of the podium slots shortly after the restart, he gave a chink of light to Ash Sutton (Motorbase Performance Ford Focus) who accepted a rostrum-running position.

Sutton chased down Butcher and, after a robust side-by-side exchange going through Dentons, Sutton gamely clung on around the outside of the Japanese hatchback to seal second place on lap 15. He couldn't do anything about Ingram in the seven remaining race miles.

"That was a result on pure pace," reported Sutton afterwards as he had come into the race with the second lowest amount of hybrid power to deploy.

While Butcher tried to recover from Sutton's firm pass, Shedden leapfrogged his brother-in-law to nab the last step of the podium despite his eventful race.

"I could see Rory's tyres were going off and he just snagged a front going into the hairpin," said the Honda man. "That was all I needed."

There was an investigation after the race for Shedden's earlier contact with Morgan. The officials took a dim view and dropped him three places after the chequered flag had dropped.

Shedden had been trying to undercut Morgan on the exit of Lodge on the run up

Deer Leap and as the Honda's front-left corner made contact with the rear-right of Morgan's car, the Ciceley car was spat hard into the barriers. Shedden pleaded his innocence afterwards: "He came over on me on the exit of the corner. He had a lot of other options at that stage, and I really didn't..."

The officials didn't agree and pinged him back to sixth. After having fallen behind Sutton and Shedden in quick order, Butcher was lucky to hang on to what would become third place as the WSR BMW 330e M Sport of Colin Turkington was hard in his wheeltracks. The four-time champion had worked hard with his team to overcome the understeer that had afflicted the rear-wheel-drive car all through the weekend and his race pace was encouraging.

Dan Cammish had a solid run to sixth (which would be fifth) ahead of Lloyd, who had compounded his hairpin slip-up with another spill at the Hislop's chicane on lap 11. Quietly plying his trade, and with the least hybrid power of all, BTC man Cook's run to eighth in his Honda Civic Type R improved solidly from his 10th position starting slot.

From sixth on the grid, Dan Rowbottom might have expected more than 10th in his Team Dynamics Honda Civic but his chances were undone by a poor getaway. He fared better than WSR BMW man Jake Hill. His attempt to restore a top-10 place after qualifying on row eight (*see brief*) was thwarted by early contact with team-mate Jelley, as he was shoved from behind in the concertina at the Island hairpin on lap one. Three points for 13th place over the line was a scant reward.

Race 2

While Ingram's run to victory in race one had been at a virtual canter, at least he was made to work a bit harder in race two.

From the front row, Sutton was forced to look to the outside as the pack powered down towards Old Hall as Ingram clung gamely on to the inside line. Far from fleeing down the road, Ingram was only

able to stretch tenths of a second on the pursuing Ford and he was eventually able to eke it out to over a second after eight laps.

"Ash kept it fast all the way through," said Ingram after eventually finishing 0.979s clear of the reigning champion. "The gap was to and fro all the way through. Every time he pulled up to me, I had to push and then he would catch back up again."

"Once again, the car was amazing: I have never had the situation where we take the car out of the truck for the opening free practice session and we haven't had to touch it at all."

Sutton was pleased that engineering work on his Motorbase car had help to minimise the drop off it had experienced over the opening three meetings of the season. He also employed sense over sensational as he realised that banking a sixth rostrum finish of the campaign so far was a better idea than putting it all on the line.

"I wasn't going to push him so hard that we both ended up getting a puncture. I am playing the longer game," said the 28-year-old. "I realise that two second places are better than one and a non-finish. I could have pushed up and got on the back of Tom, but would we have got past? There would have been a lot of risk involved."

Another podium for Turkington, which was taken with a cheeky round-the-outside pass of Butcher at the Island hairpin on lap eight, was a step forward.

"Rory was parked on the white line on the inside of the corner," said the Northern Irishman, "so I decided to take the high road... and it worked."

Butcher followed home in fourth. Shedden managed to capitalise on the slightest of mistakes from Cammish at the Island hairpin on lap 10 to lunge for the apex, and he made it ahead of the Napa-backed car after earlier having deposed Lloyd to bank fifth place.

Behind Cammish, Hill's rise to seventh from 13th on the grid was one of the highlights of the 15 laps. The Kent man

leapt to 10th immediately and then battled his way ahead of four-time 2022 winner Cook coming out of Lodge at half distance and then stalked Lloyd to outgun him on the exit of Island hairpin with three laps to go.

Lloyd was ahead of the subdued Cook, while the much-improved Ricky Collard (Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla) rounded out the top 10.

Race 3

If the opening two races had failed to spark into life, the third was where the drama ramped up to 11 – and it all happened in the opening two miles.

With Jelley's BMW drawn from 12th in race one to pole position in the reversed-grid race, alongside Aiden Moffat's Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50, the path was clear for a rear-wheel-drive machine to turn the screw.

And so it proved, with Jelley controlling the pace throughout. He led from the Infiniti from lights out with Collard slotting into third from Lloyd.

The first to err was Hill – from sixth on the grid – who locked up and went wide at the Island hairpin. It dropped him to the lower order, but that was probably a good thing given what was about to happen.

As Lloyd got a run on Collard coming over Hilltop, he went to protect the inside line on the run down to Hislop's and the pair made contact. Lloyd was fired heavily into the wall and bounced back into the path of the oncoming cars, causing chaos behind.

Lloyd was hit amidships by an unsighted Turkington at high speed and Michael Crees (Power Maxed Vauxhall) also struck the errant cars. Lloyd went to hospital for checks afterwards but was later released.

To avoid the chaos, Ingram fired across the grass and collected a radiator full of greenery, as did Sutton – which would force them both to pit. It would have a massive effect on the championship picture particularly as Cook had inherited fourth place as a result of the collisions.

When the safety car was bought in after a five-lap hiatus, Jelley set about getting the most from the four fresher Goodyears he had saved and had the gap up to over two seconds to his pursuers before throttling back. It wasn't all plain sailing for the Leicester driver though.

"There was a funny noise coming from the car on the way to the grid," he explained. "I reckoned it was coming from the hybrid system, so I used it sparingly throughout the race. When you have a lead like that, you are just waiting for something to go wrong..."

His patience with the deployment gave Moffat a little sniff of a chance, but he was never really in the game.

Collard crossed the line in third place but it was judged that he had been over his start position on the grid, which meant the closely following Cook was about to inherit what had seemed like an unlikely podium to rescue his weekend.

"I knew Butcher had a penalty and, in that situation, you have to balance up risk versus reward," said the Honda man. The rewards were supercharged when the ailing Sutton and Ingram, both charging through the pack to rescue some points from the event, would only be able to manage 16th and 17th spots.

Collard's censure dropped him to seventh, behind Sheddren, Butcher and Cammish. Morgan's top gear from 16th on the grid helped him to snatch a late eighth place, while Ash Hand (Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra) and Aron Taylor-Smith (Team Hard Cupra) rounded out the top 10.



Stephen Jelley was in command in the finale race



John Cook salvaged a podium during race three



Dan Lloyd was hospitalised in this race-three crash, but was later given the all-clear

SUPPORT RACES

There were some familiar features to the British Touring Car support races at Croft, such as James Kellett winning both of the Ginetta GT4 Supercup contests. But his latest two wins could not have been more different.

The Century Motorsport driver dominated the opener, triumphing by 16.194 seconds – the third-largest margin in series history. But he only grabbed the race-two lead across the line after a dramatic finish.

Kellett had earlier been demoted to fourth while Josh Rattican was piling the pressure on leader Reece Somerfield. But Somerfield ran wide at Lodge on the final lap, and Rattican barged through. However, Somerfield then tipped Elite's Rattican into a spin across the line, with Aston Millar narrowly missing both Rattican and the pit entry barrier, enabling Kellett to take a bizarre 0.107s win. Somerfield was later disqualified for the contact.

British Formula 4 also had a familiar feel to it. Hitech's Alex Dunne dominated the opener before it all unravelled in the partially reversed-grid contest as he spun through Cascades and had to settle for ninth. He was then third in the finale,

making a poor start from pole and losing out to Carlin's first-time winner Louis Sharp and Georgi Dimitrov. Argenti's Mercedes junior Daniel Guinchard was also a new victor in race two, profiting from suspension woes for Joseph Loake.

But one pattern that did come to an end was Marc Warren's Ginetta GT Academy dominance. Rookie Ravi Ramyead jumped the unbeaten Warren off the line in the first race, and passed him into the chicane on the first lap of race two to take both wins.

Elsewhere, Mini Challenge points leader Sam Weller was unstoppable in the opener, heading home title rival Jack Mitchell. Jason Lockwood grabbed his maiden win later, while Hybrid Tune's Weller took more silverware with third.

Will Martin and Matthew Graham charged to the Porsche Carrera Cup GB spoils. But star of the show was Pro-Am racer Charles Rainford.

He qualified a brilliant fourth, climbed to second and, although Adam Smalley and Kiern Jewiss relegated him in race one, he defied Jewiss second time around to finish runner-up.

Stephen Lickerish

RACE WINNERS

Ginetta GT4 Supercup
Races 1 & 2: James Kellett (Century Motorsport)

British Formula 4
Race 1: Alex Dunne (Hitech GP);
Race 2: Daniel Guinchard (Argenti Motorsport); Races 3:

Louis Sharp (Carlin)

Ginetta GT Academy
Races 1 & 2: Ravi Ramyead (W2R)

Mini Challenge
Race 1: Sam Weller (Hybrid)

Tune); **Race 2:** Jason Lockwood (Excelr8 Motorsport)

Porsche Carrera Cup GB
Race 1: Will Martin (Richardson Racing); **Race 2:** Matthew Graham (Redline Racing)



Will Martin charged to victory in the opening Porsche race

RESULTS

BTCC

Round 10

Laps: 18 Track: warm and dry

DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1 Tom Ingram (4)	Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N	28m 03.964s
2 Ash Sutton (2)	Motorbase Performance Ford Focus ST	+3.370s
3 Rory Butcher (9)	Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla	+7.207s
4 Colin Turkington (3)	WSR BMW 330e M Sport	+7.307s
5 Dan Cammish	Motorbase Performance Ford Focus ST	+8.248s
6 Gordon Shedden (7)	Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R	+5.194s*
7 Dan Lloyd (8)	Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N	+8.499s
8 Josh Cook (1)	BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R	+8.767s
9 Daniel Rowbottom (10)	Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R	+9.261s
10 Ricky Collard	Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla	+9.836s

11 Stephen Jelley (WSR BMW 330e M Sport) +10.020s; 12 Aiden Moffat (Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50) +10.633s; 13 Jake Hill (MB Motorsport BMW 330e M Sport) +11.454s; 14 Michael Crees (Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra) +16.644s; 15 Bobby Thompson (Team Hard Cupra) +17.644s; 16 Aron Taylor-Smith (Team Hard Cupra) +17.870s; 17 Jason Plato (BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R) +19.419s; 18 George Gamble (Ciceley Motorsport BMW 330e M Sport) +19.676s; 19 Sam Osborne (Motorbase Performance Ford Focus ST) +21.109s; 20 Ollie Jackson (Motorbase Performance Ford Focus ST) +23.795s; 21 Jade Edwards (BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R) +24.627s; 22 Nic Hamilton (Team Hard Cupra) +29.832s; 23 Dexter Patterson (Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50) +29.954s; 24 Jack Butel (Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N) +35.409s; 25 Rick Parfitt (Team Hard Cupra) +1m22.844s; 26 Will Powell (Team Hard Cupra) 15 laps/damage; R Ash Hand (Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra) 10 laps/brake fire; R Tom Chilton (Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N) 4 laps/damage; R Adam Morgan (6) (Ciceley Motorsport BMW 330e M Sport) 3 laps/accident. **Pole position:** Ingram 1m25.468s (93.76mph). **Winner's average speed:** 85.65mph. **Fastest lap:** Lloyd 1m26.279s (92.88mph). **Lap leaders:** Ingram 1-18. * = three-place grid drop for contact.

Round 11: 15 laps Track: dry

DRIVER	TIME
1 Ingram (1)	21m46.431s
2 Sutton (2)	+0.979s
3 Turkington (5)	+1.302s
4 Butcher (4)	+7.201s
5 Sheddren (3)	+10.037s
6 Cammish (6)	+12.271s
7 Hill	+13.076s
8 Lloyd (7)	+13.824s
9 Cook (8)	+14.913s
10 Collard (10)	+15.150s

11 Moffat +15.385s; 12 Jelley +15.603s; 13 Crees +18.266s; 14 Thompson +21.410s; 15 Taylor-Smith +22.086s; 16 Morgan +22.286s; 17 Plato +23.755s; 18 Gamble +26.341s; 19 Edwards +31.390s; 20 Patterson +52.621s; 21 Osborne +33.169s; 22 Hand +33.219s; 23 Butcher +33.462s; 24 Jackson +33.778s; 25 Parfitt +37.131s; 26 Rowbottom (9) +49.722s; 27 Hamilton +1m26.998s; 28 Chilton 1 lap; 29 Powell 3 laps. **Winner's average speed:** 92.00mph. **Fastest lap:** Sutton 1m26.132s (95.03mph). **Lap leaders:** Ingram 1-15.

Laps without hybrid: (1) = 10; (2) = 9; (3) = 8; (4) = 7; (5) = 6; (6) = 5; (7) = 4; (8) = 3; (9) = 2; (10) = 1

Drivers standngs

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Josh Cook	169
2	Tom Ingram	154
3	Ash Sutton	151
4	Colin Turkington	140
5	Jake Hill	119
6	Gordon Sheddren	106
7	Rory Butcher	104
8	Adam Morgan	94
9	Daniel Lloyd	84
10	Dan Cammish	72

11 Dan Rowbottom 64; 12 Stephen Jelley 53; 13 George Gamble 47; 14 Bobby Thompson 46; 15 Jason Plato 34; 16 Ash Hand 31; 17 Aiden Moffat 29; 18 Michael Crees 27; 19 Tom Chilton 24; 20 Aron Taylor-Smith 23; 21 Ricky Collard 22; 22 Ollie Jackson 8; 23 Dexter Patterson 1; 24 Sam Osborne 1; 25 Jade Edwards 1.

Independents Trophy

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Cook	219
2	Morgan	161
3	Thompson	141
4	Gamble	134
5	Taylor-Smith	121
6	Moffat	118
7	Plato	115
8	Crees	109
9	Hand	100
10	Edwards	73

11 Patterson 62; 12 Nic Hamilton 58; 13 Rick Parfitt 40; 14 Will Powell 31.

FEATURE

VIC LEE:

ACHIEVING THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS IN BRITISH TOURING CARS

The team owner and driver mentor tackles the MN readers' questions. By Matt James



Vic Lee oversaw two BTCC titles

Winning the British Touring Car Championship is tough enough and doing it as a team owner is a huge achievement. Vic Lee's crowning moment came when Will Hoy claimed the crown in 1991 and Vic Lee Motorsport repeated the feat in the tin-top series' most dramatic showdown in 1992 with Tim Harvey at the controls.

Although the Kent team boss was forced to take a sabbatical from the sport, his success was at the start of what would become the most competitive period in the category's history. It was a future that had been mapped out by a committee that included Lee himself. Those were the building blocks that launched the Super Touring era.

Lee returned to the BTCC with Peugeot in 2001 at the start of the BTC-Touring class with the unwieldy 406 model, but it was beset with problems. The subsequent 307 was a well-built machine, but the French firm pulled the plug in 2003.

Lee has been a regular face in the paddocks since and has his arm around the shoulder of some up-and-coming drivers and has been involved with the RAM Racing team in the British GT championship this term too.

He took time out of his schedule to tackle the Motorsport News readers' questions.

Question: How did you get into motor racing? Did you want to be a Formula 1 World champion when you started?

James Hilton

Via email

Vic Lee: "Where I grew up, there was a guy along the road from us who did some rallying. He used to build these cars in his back garden in his double garage, he was a guy called Micky Greenland. We were family friends, and I used to go and work with him from about the age of 12. He was building Austin 1800s and he ended up doing the London-to-Sydney Rally.

"When I was 15, I got a part-time job in a garage that was also near to us. It was run by a guy called Howard Drake. He used to race and as soon as I had seen his racing car and shown an interest, I was away doing things with that all the time.

"Howard progressed into Formula Ford, and I would help him out building engines and chassis and all sorts.



Peugeot 406 was a struggle for VLM

Right from the age of 17 years old, I was really hands on.

"It was the engineering side that appealed to me most. I love looking at a set of regulations – especially in a one-make series. You are always trying to get an edge over someone else. If all the cars are identical – and OK, there might be a variance in the drivers – if you can find an edge, it can give you a big advantage and that is very satisfying. You want to get the very best out of everything. From that arena, I started learning about suspension geometry, chassis dynamics and weight distribution."

"After that, I went on to North West Kent College of Technology and instead of doing the basic course, I went and studied chassis dynamics."

MN: It is quite a specialised course that early on in your career – most engineers

would opt for a course that was more general...

VL: "Yes, but I think that came from my experience with the rally cars. You were always beefing up suspension because of the terrain it was going to have to deal with. You were essentially working with converted standard road cars and so the handling of the car and getting its engineering right could really make a difference. You had to work within the guidelines of the regulations in terms of which bits of the car you could and couldn't move, so you were always trying to think outside of the box."

MN: As well as the engineering, you dabbled a bit in racing yourself too...

VL: "At the age of 15, I had been testing rally cars on a place called Dartford Heath. It was an unused bit of land where you could get away with pounding around and testing all sorts of cars. I was out there in the snow and ice and all sorts, and it gave me a good grounding in car control. They thought I had some sort of talent – which is more than I have thought I have ever have..."

"My first racing car was in 1971. I bought an ex-Steve Patterson Mini and I raced in Modified Saloons. It was a little 1300cc car and I rebuilt the thing and took enormous pride in it. Howard Drake phoned me and asked if I wanted to do some testing in a Formula Ford 2000 car. I really wasn't too keen on those types of cars and it all felt a bit alien to me. It didn't do anything for me. I was racing a Hillman Imp too, I just did

continued on page 22

"People seemed to think I had more talent than I did "

Vic Lee



Team-mates Ian Flux and Vic Lee get up close and personal in the 1988 British Touring Car Championship

FEATURE

various bits and bobs to keep my hand, but I was really more interested in fettling the cars. I was more interested in building up my engineering business, which is why I never really made it as a driver.

“Colin Davids, who worked for Tony Lanfranchi, started running some VW Golfs in Production Saloons in the mid-1980s and I ended up working with him and driving for him.”

Question: It was a big leap from running in Production Saloons to the British Touring Car Championship in 1990 with Jeff Allam in a BMW M3? How did you manage it?

John Charles

Via email

VL: “I got interested in the British Touring Car Championship in the late 1980s. I looked at all of the teams that were out there at the time, and none of them were doing anything special. It’s not rocket science to go the extra mile to run a race car, but none of them seemed to be putting in too much effort. They were Group A-spec cars, which aren’t particularly trick, but you just had to know how to get the best out of them within what you could do within the regulations.”

“Prodrive were in bed with BMW when I was looking around. I had a close look at the BMW M3 because even at that time, there were rumours going around that the all-conquering Ford Sierra RS500s would be outlawed in the future. I got involved with Steve Soper and I went out to Italy to Bigazzi and checked out at how they were running cars. They were running the 2.5-litre car but you could just see that it was road-going race car, rather than an road car that had been converted to race.”

“It’s funny, but there was no other real ambition other than creating a touring car team to fight for the title. Everyone plots their course in life, and that was an arena where I felt comfortable. I knew I could do something there and I knew I could do a job as well, if not better, than the teams that were out there then.”

Question: Could you see where the BTCC was headed when you joined in 1990?

Barry May

Via email

VL: “There was a championship there with some good names involved in it, the cars were great and there were some good companies involved in it too, but what it lacked was marketing. Andy Rouse, David Richards, Dave Cook and myself started TOCA to help steer it in the right direction...”

MN: And current chief executive Alan Gow was in on the ground floor too... **VL:** “He wasn’t there at the start, it was us four. We set it up and Alan Gow was a salesman for Andy Rouse selling motorsport parts. TOCA got the rights



Jeff Allam was the first VLM driver in a BMW M3

to do the marketing for the British Touring Car Championship from the RAC MSA and our plan was to put it on some sort of commercial footing, so that there would be a reward for the teams and the drivers. It is a very expensive championship and even today drivers have to take anything between £350,000 to £650,000 to a team just to be competitive. And all you get at the end of it, even if you are successful, are couple of tin pots to put on your mantle piece.”

“We wanted to put the BTCC on a stronger financial footing. At the time, you had DTM which had a lot of manufacturer money and there was a lot of promotion off-track to get people to the tracks, but we had none of that. But, the biggest thing we had on our side was [TV presenter and arch-BTCC enthusiast] Steve Rider. I really don’t think he gets the credit that he deserves for what he has done for the category. Just think about where the

BTCC is today – he has done an amazing job to keep it front and centre even when it has flitted from channel to channel.

“TOCA was moving quickly in its early days and we were all very busy running our teams as well as looking out for the series. We needed someone to do some of the administration for us and the running around and keeping it all together and Rouse said he had this guy Alan Gow working for him who could help out. He was, if it is not too unkind, a Girl Friday for us.” **MN:** Could you ever have imagined, though, from those early steps that five or six years down the road you would be flooded with high-profile names and manufacturer entries? **VL:** “We certainly didn’t imagine that, but what we did know what that if you deviated too far away from what the manufacturers were actually putting out to the public in terms of product, you would kill it. That would turn them

away from the series.

“The early days of the two-litre formula were fantastic, because you had the likes of Vauxhall, BMW, Ford, Toyota, Mazda, Volvo, Peugeot, they were all there. The cars were all recognisable and some of them were aspirational too. Those early days were really strong but Super Touring got into its prime in the late 1990s, it just got far too expensive. It got ridiculous and the cars weren’t really representative of what the firms were putting on the road. The cars became like black magic, and it was effectively engineering masturbation which caused the downfall of the category.”

Question: What was it like going up against the works BMW team as a privateer?

Emma Facey

Via email

VL: “Everyone thought I was completely bonkers to have done that.

I was friendly with Tim Harvey and I was trying to help him. He wanted to establish himself as a touring car driver.

“In his early days he was driving an Istel-backed Rover and it was a private team running ex-TWR cars. Tim and I went to Prodrive in the late 1980s and had a meeting with David Richards and David Lapworth to see if there was anything we could do to get Tim a drive in the BMW M3. We almost got laughed out of the building. The conversation was very one-sided and we got treated like we were just not welcome.”

“That thought stayed in my head. We had a look around the workshop and it was all very professional, but I wondered just how committed the staff actually were to what they were doing. There was a great passion from David Richards and David Lapworth, but I turned around to Tim and said that I couldn’t feel any magic in the place. We had been talked to as if we were idiots, so I suggested to Tim that we



This dramatic crash at the end of the 1992 season was a watershed for the BTCC and helped Tim Harvey to claim his BTCC title triumph

“They all thought I was nuts going up against BMW”

Vic Lee



Steve Soper leads Tim Harvey in VLM BMWs

should have a go at it ourselves.

"I went and had a look in Germany at the tin-top series there to see how they were doing it, and in late 1989 I bought a Bigazzi car, brought it back to England and pulled it all to pieces. We inspected it, measured it and put it all back together in our workshops in Northfleet in Kent. I realised we could do the BTCC, and I was determined.

"Tim was driving elsewhere, but Jeff Allam and I managed to get enough money together, and off we went racing in 1990. We finished third in the points as a privateer in Class B."

MN: So Prodrive, which was the BMW-blessed BTCC team, created its own monster in pushing you to form your own team?

VL: "For me they did, yes. Certain things happen in your life and you don't let them go until you, in your own mind, have put them right and that was certainly the case there. Once we managed to put the whole team together and I had a bunch of guys around me that were all pulling in the same direction, then it was a way of me making up for what had happened at Prodrive all those years before."

Question: Is there a touring car driver you never had in your team that you wanted? Is there a driver in your team you wish you had never had?

Garry Jennings

Via email

VL: "Unfortunately I wasn't around at the time, but I would love to have run Jason Plato. And I was also very very pleased to have had the opportunity to run Steve Soper.

"In my mind, there are two types of

drivers. You have the drivers who race cars, and racing drivers. The racing drivers – like Steve Soper and Jason Plato – have got a hunger and a heart as big as a lion. It is the same for people like Will Hoy and Tim Harvey.

"It is not just about the driving, either, they have so much input into the whole thing. They put all their efforts into getting the best out of themselves away from the track as well as at it, and they galvanise the team around them and want to know everything about the car too. They will use any advantage to find an edge, and those are the types of drivers I want.

"I have also had a few cruisers – people like Laurence Bristow and Ray Bellm – but motorsport needs people like that to be able to keep itself afloat! But they improve when they are with a top team because they are able to learn so much."

MN sets the scene: The British Touring Car Championship reached its dramatic climax in 1992 with three drivers in contention for the crown. It ended with a battered VLM BMW 318iS of Steve Soper and a dented Vauxhall of John Cleland in the gravel. The fireworks handed the crown to Soper's team-mate Tim Harvey.

Question: Were there any team orders for Steve Soper at Silverstone in 1992?

Jason Inglis

Via email

VL: "This question is never ever going to go away, is it? There are two answers I can give you: if there was, I certainly didn't know anything about it and secondly, remember, I wasn't there!

"I know from the man himself that



Will Hoy celebrates a 1991 victory at Silverstone on his way to the BTCC title silverware that season

there were no team orders as such. Anybody who knows motor racing and follows the series knows that what happened between Steve Soper and John Cleland started a long way before that incident. I think John got himself in such a stew.

"Steve came from the very back and managed to get ahead of Cleland, which is something he really shouldn't have been able to do. It was amazing. Steve overtook Cleland in a clean move into the Vale. Straight away, John Cleland is

giving him the one-handed wrist-shake gesture. I think he knew then that Steve was in the battle and could have an impact on what happened in the championship. Not only then did Cleland have to beat Tim Harvey in the points, he had Steve in the mix too.

"When they went through the complex and Cleland bounced off the kerb and was on two wheels and into Steve, think Steve got incensed that someone had just tried to take him off.

"For both of them and for touring

cars, it is the shot and the image that everyone loves. It is still a talking point some 30 years down the road."

Question: Who was the best team-mate you ever had?

Ian Flux

Via email

VL: "He is asking that because he knows he was my team-mate! If I don't say him, I am obviously going to be sexually assaulted..."

"I didn't really have that many: only continued on page 24

FEATURE



Vic Lee passes on advice to his driver Harvey in 1992



Two BTCC crowns came with BMW in the British Touring Car series

really Chris Hodgetts, Mark Hales and Fluxie."

MN: That whole Supra deal: you were just a plug in and play driver at that point, weren't you?

VL: "It was Dave Lampitt's team, MIL Motorsport, and it was funded by Alex Moss. I brought a few sponsors onboard. I was unfortunately one of those BTCC paying drivers. The car had a fantastic amount of potential but the regulations didn't help it and I don't think Toyota helped it too much. Alex Moss was throwing everything at it he could financially, but in hindsight, he would have been just as rewarded if he had gone and put all his money on a racehorse.

"It was a straight six turbocharged car, but it had a lot of issues with the engine block moving around. It had studs going down through the engine to hold it in place, but there was never a proper frame underneath it to stop it from moving around. As soon as you hit the power the engine kept on moving and twisting. We went through more engines than I have had hot dinners that season."

Question: What do you think your team could have achieved if you had not had to take a break from racing?

Damien Doherty

Via email

Question: Would you run a team in the BTCC with the new regulations?

Chris Spearman

Via email

VL: "I would like to think that I would still be at the top of my game in current-day touring cars if I wanted to be in current-day touring cars.

"I don't think the regulations are right for the particular championship, personally. I think they are very complicated cars today. There is a lot of cost associated with the hybrid systems – some people love it, some people hate it and I am not a lover of it. I don't think it has done the BTCC any favours.

"And also, the modern-day cars don't

leave much room for the engineers to employ a bit of lateral thinking. It is not an engineering challenge in the way that it used to be. I get why it had to be done because there has always been a drive to make things parallel across all the cars. It's just not for me.

"Also, I don't like the driving standards. When I was racing in it, I used to get upset when a fly hit my car, let alone some of the crashing and bashing that is going on out there today. I know it is good for TV and now it is a show and I get that – it still pulls the crowds and the spectators love it. I understand it still has a place, but it is just not for me.

"With the regulations being as tightly controlled as they are, you run the risk of turning the manufacturers off it. If you look at TCR, they are built by the manufacturers that they can then go and sell and it can be raced anywhere around the world. I think there are too many limitations on the BTCC and it has become too expensive."

MN: Do you think the BTCC is on a bit of a limb then?

VL: "I think it is out of step with what is going on elsewhere, and that can create problems for teams. I don't want to get into the politics, but there is not a nice atmosphere in the paddock with all the wrangling between who has an [BTCC TOCA] M-Sport engine, a Neil Brown-tuned one or a Mountune one or whatever. I am hearing all sorts about boost figures... Everyone has got different opinions, but when you walk around and talk to people they are all actually valid. Everyone has a point in their own way. It is hard to disagree with any of them, so it is so hard to manage that and get it right. That is part of the reason modern-day touring cars doesn't do that much for me."

"Also, back in the day, you had to earn your stripes to be a BTCC driver. Now, if you have a banker dad or you are a successful businessman, you can just go and buy a drive."

Question: If you had a touring car team now, which two drivers would you put in it?

Matt James

Motorsport News

VL: "Out of the current crop? I would definitely have Ash Sutton and I would put a young driver in with him to learn. If you said someone who is on the grid now, I would say I would put [Tom] Ingram with Sutton."

Question: Why was it so difficult to get Peugeot to win in the British Touring Car Championship when you ran the French cars in 2001 to 2003?

Jack Crowther

Via email

VL: "With Peugeot, when I first started talking with them, we had been through Super Production with the 306. That was my favourite type of car and that was a road car which we turned into the fastest production car out there. All the competitors were moaning that we needed more weight in the car but we had a truly successful time."

"Peugeot wanted to throw its weight behind the 406, which was its flagship car. It was a big car and it had a multitude of engines. We had to use the two-litre and Richard Longman, bless him, was doing the powerplant. It had a very long wheelbase and it was problematic from the start. It was just lethargic and it lacked horsepower compared to the Vauxhall Astra Coupe. We had one successful meeting at Oulton Park when the engine was right on the edge but that was our only highlight."

"Peugeot asked us to build the 307 which we did and it was a fantastic year, but halfway through the season Peugeot decided to pull out of worldwide motorsport. That was the end of that."

Question: What is your favourite aftershave? You always seemed to wear loads?

Ian Flux

Via email

VL: "It has been the same one since



Meeting of minds (l-r): Alan Gow, Tim Harvey, Vic Lee and Ray Bellm

I was 22! It is not an aftershave, it is a body splash, like a cologne. It is called Bronnley, seeing as Fluxie is interested!"

Question: You always seem to be helping drivers in the background – what makes you a good talent-spotter?

Paul Hale

Via email

VL: "You watch the way drivers conduct themselves both in the car and out of the car. A lot of racing dads talk to me through friends of friends and they reckon their little Johnny is the next Lewis Hamilton or George Russell because they have won this, that or the other in karting. But, to be honest, when you are stepping out of karts and into cars, karting means jack shit. It just doesn't necessarily translate into you becoming a good race car driver."

"I absolutely love Ginetta Junior. It is a shame that the car is not something that relates to a road car but the racing has got better over the years because they do seem to tidy up the driving standards. They like to keep it quite sensible. When you watch those kids and you see some of the moves they make, it is stunning. But I like to go down to their awnings and watch the drivers. You can see some of them sitting there on their phones or playing on a PlayStation. Then there is a different type of driver and he or she is

there working with the guys on the car or they are looking at their data."

"Then there are the other types of kids. I am not generalising, but I will talk about my own grandchildren: they can't have a conversation with you unless it is all done in this silly text message language. On the flipside, there are those who don't do that and they can have a conversation with you and they are always asking questions."

"I have seen across my career, there are those who can buy talent because they have the money to do hundreds and hundreds of laps at any circuit they want to but then you have kids who have absolutely nothing and their parents have given them their last mortgage payment just to make sure they are on the grid. They normally are the ones with the talent because they have got more to prove than those drivers who can just pitch up and pay for everything. Most of the people I try to help are in the latter category."

"I am not saying that they deserve better treatment than anyone who is rich, but they seem to have more heart and a desire to prove themselves – and, as a result of that, they put more into it."

Question: What advice would you give to a young driver starting out today?

Russell Scobie

Via email

VL: "There are a lot of kids with natural talent but in today's world, that is not enough. As good as you might be in the car, you have got to be even better outside of it."

"Drivers have to understand that they have to have sympathy on the poor little car that they are ragging the backside out of and smashing it over the kerbs. Drivers don't need to engineer the car, but they need to understand a bit about it. They should go away and learn about things like understeer and oversteer and the dynamics of the chassis. If you can add that knowledge to technical ability, and add in some marketing ability and skills, you will be on the right path." ■

"Young drivers need to learn about their cars"

Vic Lee



Lee returned to the BTCC from 2001-'03 with Peugeot

Danny Buxton handles the 307 at Brands in its final year



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RACING REPORTS

THRUXTON HISTORIC FESTIVAL: BY MARCUS PYE

JUNE 11-12

Photos: Paul Lawrence



Wainwright and Tilley put on a fine display



Neil Brown and Richard Dutton (l) set off from varied Jack Sears grid

WAINWRIGHT COMPLETES A THUXTON CIRCLE

"The names on that cup are amazing," beamed Rob Wainwright, who added his to the BARC's magnificent Jochen Rindt Memorial Trophy by winning the sensational CRCC single-seater double-header that highlighted the annual Thruxton Historic event.

That Wainwright, 34, was racing the works March 722 in which Ronnie Peterson won the European Formula 2 Championship round on Easter Monday 1972 was fantastic.

Half a century on, Wainwright's victory was far from straightforward. The meeting will be remembered for the mesmeric battle with 22-year-old circuit debutant Benn Tilley (FAtlantic Modus M1). The 2018 Classic FF1600 champion was on Wainwright's tail when the leader skittered over the chicane exit kerbs and spun on lap five. He recovered quickly and, when Tilley

was badly delayed lapping three competitors scrapping at Church, his five-second cushion was gone.

But with the 1920cc BDA-powered March menacingly filling his mirrors, the impressive youngster clung on through relentless traffic, repelling every challenge thrown at him to win by 0.740s. Matt Wrigley and Martin Wood in March 79B and 73B respectively led the chase, with Dan Eagling (in Clive Wood's Derek Warwick tribute Ralt-Toyota RT1) and Lee Bankhurst (Royale RP30) topping the F3 and FF2000 divisions.

Sunday's decider started with Tilley quickest out of the blocks, but as Wainwright closed on the orange Modus its front upright pin sheared at Noble. Tilley stopped it safely on reflexes, then waved his congratulations as his rival won the big prize in Nick Pancisi's car. Wrigley and Chris Porritt (ex-Alo Lawler Chevron

B29) were next home, with Lifetime Racing's Eagling and Ian Pearson (RP30) claiming the other splits.

Clashing events and economics decimated Motor Racing Legends' one-hour grids. In the largest, at 15 cars, Ben Adams (Lola Mk1) gave Gareth Burnett and Michael Birch's ex-Graham Hill Lotus 15 and a pair of Lister-Jaguars the slip in the Stirling Moss Trophy 1950s sportscar race. Will Nuthall took over Malcolm Paul's Lotus-Bristol 10 and pounced on the Jaguars of Ben Eastick/Karl Jones (D-type) and Rudiger Friedrichs (C-type) to top the concurrent RAC Woodcote Trophy set.

Ric Wood sizzled past Andy Middlehurst/Jonathan Bailey as Nissan Skylines trumped Ford Sierra RS500s in the Historic Touring Car Challenge. Andrew and Max Banks (Alfa Romeo GTA) screamed away from Neil Brown's Cortina Lotus and

Richard Dutton's Escort twin-cam which conked out in U2TC/Sixties TCC. Wrigley/Wainwright beat four Jaguar Classic Challenge/Pre-'63 GT rivals despite two stop-go penalties.

The Midget and Sprite Challenge rounds were very hard fought. Pippa Cow snatching Saturday's victory from Tom Walker at the last corner. Tom sporting gave defending champion Pippa a front tyre for Sunday's re-match and won when her gearbox failed.

Brown/Dutton shrugged off Peter Chambers in the HRDC Jack Sears Trophy Cortina-fest. Jamie Boot out-grunted Andrew Smith (Marcos 1800GT) and poleman Ben Colburn (Lenham Sprite) in Pre-'66 Allstars and James Wright was a surprised Alfa Classic winner having seen Chris Snowdon, Richard Merrell and Ambrogio Perfetti trip up at the chicane.

RACE WINNERS

Jochen Rindt Memorial Trophy

Race 1: Benn Tilley (Modus M1); Race 2: Rob Wainwright (March 722)

Neil Brown/Richard Dutton (Ford Lotus Cortina)

Dunlop Allstars

Jamie Boot (TVR Griffith)

Midget and Sprite Challenge

Race 1: Pippa Cow (Austin-Healey Sprite); Race 2: Tom Walker (Austin-Healey Sprite)

Jaguar Classic Challenge/Pre-'63

Matt Wrigley/Rob Wainwright (Jaguar E-type)

RAC Woodcote/ Stirling Moss Trophy

Ben Adams (Lola Mk1)

Sixties Touring Cars/ U2TC

Andrew and Max Banks (Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint GTA)

Historic Touring Car Challenge

Ric Wood (Nissan Skyline GT-R R32)

Alfa Romeo Challenge

James Wright (75 Turbo)

Jack Sears Trophy

Photos: Jim Moir

KNOCKHILL: SMRC BY STEPHEN BRUNSDON

JUNE 12

SMITH TAKES A DOUBLE WIN – AFTER CRASHING

Finlay Brunton moved into the lead of the Scottish C1 Cup standings with victory in the 90-minute endurance event at Knockhill last weekend.

The Minimax Racing man was helped out by a familiar face too, as 2019 title rival Ryan Smith teamed up with him in the two-car effort that came home ahead of Calum Conway and Marc Nisbet.

Smith started third and moved into the lead before handing over to Brunton at the mandatory pitstop, six seconds clear of Corson who, along with Nisbet, used the safety car intervention following Henry Gillespie's off at Butchers to bag himself a free stop under yellow.

Corson and Nisbet then collided approaching the

Hairpin which gave Brunton the win ahead of Calum Conway, with the recovering Nisbet finishing third.

Smith barely had time to celebrate his C1 victory with his 2019 title sparring partner. He was on pole for the final Mini Cooper race of the day which he duly won, albeit in utterly bizarre circumstances.

Running third approaching half-distance, Smith profited from a clash between Neil Hose and race-one winner Michael Weddell to take the lead. But the chequered flag failed to appear and Smith thought a first Cooper win was lost after an apparent brake failure sent him into a fiery spin. Smith was declared the winner, while race-two victor

Chad Little finished in fifth.

Liam McGill ended Steven Gray's Scottish Fiesta ST Cup winning streak by claiming both victories in a pair of hotly contested races.

McGill led from pole in the opener, only to fall into the clutches of a charging Gray in the closing stages. McGill was just eight-hundredths ahead going over the line. It was a similar story in race two, with Broddy Orr making it a three-way fight for honours before his spin on the exit of Clarks late in the race brought out the red flags.

Rain affected both of the Scottish Classic Sports and Saloon races, with John Kinmond dominating either encounter in his Rover 3500.



Ryan Smith's Mini didn't look this smart after the final race

RACE WINNERS

Scottish C1 Cup

Ryan Smith/Finlay Brunton (Citroen C1)

Scottish Fiesta ST Cup

Race 1 & 2: Liam McGill (Fiesta ST)

Scottish Mini Cooper Cup

Races 1 & 2: Jamie Blake (Mini Cooper R53); Race 3: Ryan Smith (Mini Cooper)

Scottish Classic Sports & Saloons

Race 1 & 2: John Kinmond (Rover 3500)

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
ROB HUFF

Tin-top World champion tackles the MN readers' posers p20

Estonian victorious in Sardinia while Breen returns M-Sport to the podium

TANAK FIRES HYUNDAI BACK INTO WRC TITLE FRAME



Breen was thrilled with his return to the WRC podium

By Graham Lister

Tanak has been in catch-up mode since the hybrid-based WRC regulations were unleashed ahead of January's Monte Carlo Rally. But its victory on a day when runaway points leader Kalle Rovanperä could do nothing but fire a cold warning shot at its rivals.

"It's been challenging, but we have shown hard work pays off," said Estonian Tanak.

"We have shown the confidence we can do a good job."

Meanwhile, Breen's podium was his second in M-Sport's Ford Puma Rally 1.

Report, p16

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RACING REPORTS

SILVERSTONE: MGCC BY GRAHAM KEILLOH

JUNE 11-12

Photos: Mick Walker



Buckley (20) prevailed in two MG Cup races



Kirkpatrick won a special anniversary MGB contest

BUCKLEY HITS RIVALS FOR SIX AS MG LIVE RETURNS

Richard Buckley made it six wins from six in MG Cup's frontrunning Class C this year by taking victory in both races at the MG Car Club's showpiece MG Live event, running in full glory for the time since 2018, on Silverstone's Grand Prix circuit.

The 2019 champion Buckley had though a close fight in both Silverstone races from fellow Rover 220 Tomcat Turbo runner Matt Simpson, who returned to familiar MG Cup surroundings for this one having switched to Metro Cup this year.

Buckley told Motorsport News: "Racing Matt [was] great fun, nice and close, he'll get me somewhere, I'll get him."

"They're [the Tomcat] pretty fast cars and Matt is really good to race against, we can go so close, mirror to mirror, almost touching each other, never exchange paint."

MG Cup shared the track with Cockshoot Cup, and Karl Green in his MG ZS 180 won both races in that despite developing a differential problem in race one that required nursing and then an overnight change for race two. Green was aided in the second encounter when early leader Paul Wignall dropped out when his coolant hose let go.

Reigning BCV8 champion Ollie Neaves competed in the championship for the first time this year and resumed familiar form by winning both races. His victory margins were narrower than those we were used to though, partly due to rule changes between seasons, and in race two Neaves had to recover from losing several places at the start.

Jason Burgess's impious MG Trophy return continued at Silverstone as he took two more clear victories. MG Trophy was accompanied by five

Metros in a non-championship Metro Cup event, and in race two they provided a thrilling race-long three-way victory battle between Jon Moore, Tim Shooter and returning champion Philip Gough. Moore prevailed, which made up somewhat for his accelerator cable snapping when leading race one. Gough won that one.

Equipe augmented the event with an extensive range of historic races, led by a special MGB60 contest marking the 60th anniversary of the MGB's launch. Some 59 MGBs took part and reigning MG Trophy champion Sam Kirkpatrick won it, prevailing in a race-long battle with Tom Smith. Smith took the lead from Kirkpatrick with a faster pitstop but Kirkpatrick was soon back ahead.

Kirkpatrick's bid for a double the next day faltered in the Equipe GTS race. He led that one from pole too, but his MGB dropped to 22nd when the pitstop round

happened under a safety car and a number of cars pitted a lap sooner than him. He recovered to third while Martin and Oliver Pratt's Morgan +4 got victory.

Mark Holme also took advantage of a pitting under a mid-race safety car to vault his Austin Healey 3000 MK11 into a lead he kept in the Equipe Libre/Pre 63 & 50s contest. It meant pacesetter Dafydd Richards finished a distant third in his Lotus 11.

Mark Halstead in his Ginetta G4R claimed a comfortable Equipe Libre/70s win, after long-time leader Grahame Bryant's Morgan +8 developed a suspected electrical issue and retired.

Bill and Howard Lancashire dominated the Morgan and Sports Car race in a +8, while John and Gary Pearson concluded the meeting by winning the two-hour GT & Sports Car Cup race in their Jaguar E-type.

RACE WINNERS

Equipe GTS Races 1 & 2: Martin Pratt/Oliver Pratt (Morgan +4)	(MGB GT V8)
MGCC Cockshoot Cup Races 1 & 2: Karl Green (MG ZS 180)	
MGCC MG Cup Races 1 & 2: Richard Buckley (Rover 220 Tomcat Turbo)	
Equipe Libre/70s Mark Halstead (Ginetta G4R)	
Equipe Libre/Pre 63 & 50s Mark Holme (Austin Healey 3000 MK11)	
Equipe MGB60 Sam Kirkpatrick (MGB Roadster)	
GT & Sports Car Cup John Pearson/Gary Pearson (Jaguar E-type)	
MGCC BCV8 Championship Races 1&2: Ollie Neaves	
Morgans & Sports Cars Bill Lancashire/Howard Lancashire (Morgan +8)	

CASTLE COMBE: CCRC BY STEFAN MACKLEY

JUNE 11-12

Photos: Steve Jones

JORDANS BOUNCE BACK FOR MINI MARVELS

Father-and-son pairing Mike and Andrew Jordan both found success in Minis at Castle Combe, having rebounded from earlier collisions.

Jordan Jr claimed victory in the second Miglia race with a well-executed pass on Rupert Deeth into Quarry at the start of the final lap after the pair had made contact in the prequel. The collision at Bobbies handed Endaf Owens top spot from Jeff Smith with Jordan Jr recovering to third from Deeth.

Similar misfortune befell Jordan Sr in Mini Se7ens, after an optimistic move into the final corner by Connor O'Brien allowed Joe Thompson to pass the pair. O'Brien was handed a 10-place grid-penalty for the repeat, but soon found himself behind Jordan Sr once again. Contact was made at Tower on the final lap, but Jordan Sr went on to win from Thompson as O'Brien retired.

Felix Fisher (Ray GR05) took advantage of the absence of brother and main title rival Josh Fisher by taking a



Mike Jordan leads Connor O'Brien and Joe Thompson

comprehensive win in the opening Castle Combe Racing Club Formula Ford 1600 race. Behind, Luke Cooper recovered to second after a lap-one excursion at the Esses. The Swift SC20 driver went one better in race two, passing Ben Mitchell (Van Diemen JL16) for the lead after Fisher had retired with a right-rear puncture.

Philip Wright (Honda Civic Type-R) capitalised on a collision between title

rival Ryan Polley and Will Self to win the opening 750 Motor Club Hot Hatch race. Polley finished second on-the-road but was disqualified for the collision and put to the back of the grid for race two. The Civic Type-R driver stormed through to finish fifth, as local man Self claimed his maiden win aboard his Peugeot 205. In the final race, Polley got the better of Self as Wright finished third after a poor start.

James Dorrington's Honda Civic won on-the-road in the opening CCRC Hot Hatch race after Gary Prebble's similar machine retired. Dorrington having charged through after spinning on the opening lap at Tower. But he was disqualified post-race for overtaking under an early safety car which handed victory to Shaun Goverd, with the Citroen AX driver winning outright in race two from a charging Dorrington.

RACE WINNERS

Mini Miglia Race 1: Endaf Owens; Race 2: Andrew Jordan	Races 1 & 2: Adam Prebble (Vauxhall Astra)
750MC Mazda Races 1, 2 & 3: Ben Short	
CCRC GTs Races 1 & 2: Kevin Bird (Porsche 911.1 Carrera Cup)	
CCRC/AMOC GT Challenge Races 1 & 2: Kevin Bird/Charles Hyde-Andrews-Bird (Porsche 911.1 Carrera Cup)	
WRDA Races 1 & 2: Chris Everill (Ginetta G50)	
CCRC Hot Hatch Races 1 & 2: Shaun Goverd (Citroen AX)	
Saloons vs Hot Hatch Challenge Dave Spiller (Audi TT)	

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RACING REPORTS

BRANDS HATCH: MSVR BY MARK LIBBETER

JUNE 11-12

Photos: Gary Hawkins

A DAY MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN EURO NASCAR



Naska (88) was a winner in Euro NASCAR 2 class



Day visited victory lane at Brands Hatch in Pro race

RACE WINNERS

NASCAR Whelen Euro Series Pro

Race 1: Alon Day (Chevrolet Camaro); **Race 2:** Alexander Graff (Ford Mustang)

NASCAR Whelen Euro Series 2

Race 1: Alberto Naska (Chevrolet Camaro); **Race 2:** Liam Hezemans (Ford Mustang)

Legends Championship

Saturday heat 1: Miles Rudman; **Heat 2:** Will Gibson; **Final:** Gibson.

Sunday heat 1: Gibson; **Heat 2:** Rudman; **Final:** Rudman.

SpeedFest Silhouettes

Races 1 & 2: Malcolm Blackman (Vauxhall Tigra)

Pickup Truck Championship

Races 1 & 2: Reece Jones

Bernie's V8s

Race 1: Aaron Moyce (TVR Tuscan Challenge); **Race 2:** Matthew Ellis (TVR Tuscan Challenge); **Race 3:** Malcolm Harding (Ford Escort RS2000)

There was no shortage of excitement and controversy as the Euro NASCAR Series made its now traditional visit to Brands Hatch as part of Motorsport Vision's highly popular American SpeedFest event.

The first Pro race was led initially by Nicolo Rocca aboard his Chevrolet Camaro, while his Italian countryman and fellow Camaro racer Gianmarco Ercoli was having to defend hard to keep three-time series champion Alon Day (also in a Camaro) at bay.

A caution period helped to bunch the trio together and

provided Day with his best chance of making progress. After several attempts to make a pass, he finally forced an opening at Drifters on lap 26 of 38 to relegate Ercoli to third. Five laps later, Day pulled off a virtually identical move to relieve Rocca of the lead before sealing a record-equaling fifth race win at Kent venue.

Ercoli and Day clashed on the run down towards Graham Hill Bend in race two while dicing for the lead, which led to Day receiving a drivethrough penalty. Alexander Graff was the grateful beneficiary, sealing

the win in his Ford Mustang ahead of Giorgio Maggi.

Drifters was the scene of the decisive move for victory in race one of the NASCAR Series 2 race. Vladimiros Tziotzis had dominated the race having started from pole, only to be usurped by Alberto Naska two laps from home in an event that was disrupted by two safety car interventions.

Liam Hezemans, younger brother of Pro series champion Loris, was victorious in the second event after a caution period had helped him catch and pass Tziotzis and Naska

late in the race.

Reece Jones recovered from a poor start to win the first Pickup Truck race after getting ahead of reigning champion George Turicci at Drifters on lap 12 of 18. David O'Regan narrowly took third, despite being knocked sideways by Mark Willis at Clearways.

Jones also claimed victory in a curtailed race two, while Turicci led home Allen Cooper for second.

Will Gibson may have won all three Legends races on Saturday had he not tangled with Marcus Pett on the final lap of race one.

Reigning champion Miles Rudman picked up the pieces to earn the victory spoils ahead of multiple champion John Mickel.

Gibson had no such trouble in race two, powering into the lead by Surtees on lap one and never looking back as Rudman edged Mickel for second. Race three was claimed again by Gibson after another fine charge from the rear of the grid.

Gibson continued his form into Sunday's first race, getting the better of Stephen Whitelegg and Andy Bird with two superb outside passes at Paddock.

Rudman claimed the spoils in race two before getting the better of Mickel in Sunday's finale after another tight battle.

Malcolm Blackman won the opening Silhouette race in his Vauxhall Tigra after fending off the attentions of Steve Burrows (Tigra) and Daniel Smith's Mercedes SLK. A mere 0.612 seconds covered the trio at the finish. Burrows and Blackman battled right to the finish of the second event too, swapping positions and making minor contact on the final lap before Blackman sealed the deal with a neat move at Surtees.

SNETTERTON: MSVR BY PETER SCHERER

JUNE 11-12

Photos: Richard Styles

COLLISIONS SPARK GT CUP FIGHTBACKS

With a first-lap collision at Wilson between John Dhillon's Lamborghini and Ian Campbell's McLaren taking out Ian Loggie's Mercedes, Morgan Tilbrook's McLaren was left with a decisive lead in the GT Cup opener.

Simon Orange's McLaren shook off an early challenge from Ben Dimmick's Radical to consolidate second. When Dimmick spun on lap three, Mike Price completed the podium in his Mercedes.

Tilbrook found his quest in race two frustrated by a very defensive Orange but just made it by before they pitted to hand to Marcus Clutton and Michael O'Brien respectively.

O'Brien came out with the

lead and couldn't be caught as Clutton had to settle for second, well clear of Loggie.

Loggie proved unbeatable in Sunday's Sprint race, with Orange once again thwarting Tilbrook's challenge. Steve Burgess's Radical managed to oust both McLarens and even closed on Loggie until a last lap spin at Brundle handed the places back to Orange and Tilbrook.

Orange picked up a drive-through penalty for putting Loggie off at Agostini in the final race, which left Tilbrook handing over to Clutton as the lead car after he had fought his way past Dimmick. But Callum Macleod took over Mike Price's Mercedes to seal their first win

with Tilbrook/Clutton second again, from Loggie.

All three Clubmans Sports Prototype races featured wheel-to-wheel duels between Steve Dickens' Mallock and Alex Champkin's Phantom. There were numerous exchanges and Champkin had just regained the race one lead when he ran out of fuel on the last lap which left Dickens in the clear from Jarred Lester's Clubman 35 and Cody Tree's Mallock.

A gear selection problem put pay to Champkin's hopes in race two as Dickens made it win number two, taking the lead on the second-to-last lap, with Lester third again. Dickens rounded off his day with a clean sweep of three

wins as Champkin followed closely after collected a jump-start penalty.

Both the 7 Series 420Rs and 1600 had a driver take two wins out of three. Jonathan Mitchell saw off Anthony Barnes and Phil Jenkins in race one and three for the 420Rs, but Barnes took race two's spoils. David Yates performed similarly in the 1600s as Gary Smith won race two.

Both United Formula Ford races had wheel-to-wheel duels between Lucas Romanek's Van Diemen and Colin Queen's Ray. After a few swaps and changes Romanek won race one, but a race-stopping tangle at Agostini in race two handed the spoils to Andre Lafond's Ray.



Mike Price/Callum Macleod were GT Cup winners

RACE WINNERS

GT Cup

Race 1: Morgan Tillbrook (McLaren 720S GT3);

Race 2: Simon Orange/ Michael O'Brien (McLaren 720S GT3); **Race 3:** Ian Loggie (Mercedes AMG GT3); **Race 4:** Mike Price/ Callum Macleod (Mercedes AMG GT3).

Clubmans Sports Prototype

Race 1, 2 & 3: Steve Dickens (Mallock Mk29)

7 Series - 420R

Races 1 & 3: Jonathan Mitchell; **Race 2:** Antony Barnes

7 Series - 1600

Races 1 & 3: David Yates; **Race 3:** Gary Smith

United Formula Ford

Race 1: Lucas Romanek (Van Diemen JL13); **Race 2:** Andre Lafond (Ray GR18)

Allcomers

Races 1 & 2: David Foster (McLaren 570S GT4)

FEATURE

JAMES COURTYNEY: AUSTRALIA'S LOST F1 STAR?

Twenty years ago it appeared little could stop the British Formula 3 racer, but a big Formula 1 testing crash set him on a new path, as *Graham Keilloh* discovers

Twenty years ago things were looking good for James Courtney, then just shy of his 22nd birthday. The Australian had bagged the British Formula Ford championship in 2000 and, after finishing fourth in his debut British Formula 3 season the following year, for 2002 had switched to reigning champion Carlin for a second go at British F3. Moreover he also alongside this was on Jaguar's driver programme and getting tests in its Formula 1 car.

"Carlin were easily the best team for the few years leading into that," Courtney tells Motorsport News, "and I was before that [in 2001] with Jaguar F3 [team], and we pushed really hard but the Carlin guys were definitely the benchmark. So when Jaguar decided to close their F3 thing and then they put me in with Carlin I was very excited, the cars were fantastic, super quick and I knew I was going to have a good season."

Carlin boss Trevor Carlin responded in kind. "As myself and a team we absolutely loved him, he was a real free spirit, bubbly super-lively chap," he tells MN. "Typical Aussie, full of confidence and bouncing around the place a bit like Tigger, so was great fun to work with and an incredible talent I have to say, so fast, such an incredible single-lap pace."

"Whatever the car was like he would always get the most out of it and more, he was one of those drivers that could take a really bad car and still whack it right up at the front. He's [also] feisty, he was a fighter."

Courtney's speed was indeed stunning. He took 11 out of the season's first 13 pole positions and 12 of the first 13 fastest race laps. He had, according to Carlin, only one Achilles' heel, that his starts weren't the best.

Courtney admits: "I was young and didn't really understand how much having a procedure and then repeating that every time, how much that would benefit your mindset and making sure you tick all the boxes ready for the start. Up until that point I'd just roll up and every time I would start it would be a different procedure but from then on, even now,

"He had incredible talent and pace"

Trevor Carlin



Courtney had Hot Wheels in British Formula 3 in 2002

I do the exact same thing as what I learned in that little period."

Carlin adds: "They [the starts] just weren't quick enough, he always lost places off the start. We did a ton of start practice. The Formula 3 car of its era the clutch was very tricky, hair trigger, and you had to have a good repeatable system for it to work consistently and he just couldn't quite get his head around it."

"Don't get me wrong he'd lose sometimes only one spot, but that's enough, especially F3 of his day there was so little overtaking. He finished second an awful lot."

It contributed to Courtney converting the above impressive pole stats to only four race victories. But still, after 15 of the 26 races he sat 40 points clear at the table top from Alan Docking Racing's Robbie Kerr next up.

But then things changed, as Courtney in early July when testing an F1 Jaguar had a savage accident at Monza, hitting the wall at Ascari at 200mph plus, after his rear suspension failed.

"I had a swollen and bleeding brain, it just slowed us down for a little while," Courtney says.

Carlin adds: "When he landed [returning from Monza] he contacted [Carlin engineer] Adrian Burgess whose a great friend of James's still to this day down in Australia. And Adrian said to him 'well what's going on?', James said 'I feel a bit weird', and Adrian looked after him and we then arranged for him to go and see a specialist doctor and he had concussion, quite badly."

In the immediate order it meant Courtney missed the next British F3 round, Rockingham's double header, and after that Kerr suddenly led him by nine points. Plus the accident's effects lingered after Courtney's return to racing.

"I had trouble with getting headaches and things in the car or even day to day for nearly 12 months while I was still healing, the brain takes a long time to heal," Courtney recalls.

"[I wasn't] worried or scared or any of that jazz, I figured that I could survive that impact and I was pretty much invincible so I just got on with it and never have I ever questioned my safety in the car, technology and all that stuff has come so far.

"We went from getting so many pole

positions and fastest laps and having really good speed and definitely when I came back the speed wasn't there. I would wake up with a massive headache and probably I played it down and didn't let on how much it was affecting me because I just wanted to get on with it and try and forget about it and win and race. So it did really affect the end part of that season and it wasn't until probably the start of the next season that I felt more comfortable and wasn't dealing with the headaches and things in the car."

"I just pretty much constantly had a migraine, so as soon as I would wake up and any sort of noise or anything I would just get ridiculous headaches."

Carlin adds: "I personally think it took over a month for him just to get back to any sense of normality, and in that period he just couldn't perform at his normal level and that was enough to throw it all. It obviously gives the other guys confidence so they push on and it's a double negative."

"It just seemed he's [before the accident] full of life and energy and then he was far more flat and quiet, just wasn't quite with it."

"I'm absolutely convinced he would

have won the championship if he hadn't had the crash in the Jaguar Formula 1 car at Monza, because that was the real turning point in his pace and his performance with us. [Kerr] wasn't as quick as us but he had good races and fought like hell and was super consistent and he got the title but really it was James's to lose."

Courtney only got one more race win that year and finished runner-up to Kerr in the table. "It was massively disappointing," Courtney notes.

"Throughout my whole career every championship I've been in I've won and British F3 championship was the only one that eluded me. I suppose I've got a cool story as to why I didn't win it but ultimately looking back when I'm older it's disappointing that I didn't get to tick that one off."

The Australian was also unable to continue in British F3 with Carlin. "He didn't have any of his own money you see," Carlin explains. "The year he drove for us Jaguar paid for it and then he had none of his own funding. Jaguar weren't having a junior programme [anymore], so he took the free drive



Courtney was used to topping the podium in the first half of 2002



He started car racing in Formula Ford and got 2000's British title

in Japan which made total sense."

Courtney says: "Once the F3 thing was out of my reach and towards the end of that year I was pretty disappointed with how some things were handled and whatever. So I realised that the whole F1 dream wasn't going to happen, [but] I still wanted to be a professional racing driver.

"For sure F1 was the focus but when that didn't happen and I had to look elsewhere and going to Japan I could get paid to race an F3 car rather if you're in Europe you having to find someone to pay or you're going to have to pay or [you have] a rare opportunity like I had at Jaguar. So it was my first step to be getting paid and that whole journey through Japan was the start of the next leg of my career."

And with TOM's and Toyota Courtney in 2003 took a crushing Japanese F3 title, winning 13 races out of 20. "It was fantastic, we had a super season," Courtney enthuses, "I won a heap more than anyone had ever won before and pole positions and all that stuff was super strong."

Courtney then had more success and enjoyment with two years in high-performance cars in Japan's

Super GT contest.

Yet Courtney had an ultimate yearning, to return home: "I'd left Australia when I was 14 [Courtney had done four years in karting in mainland Europe before moving to the UK] so at that point I'd been gone 11, 12 years and I'd had enough of being away from home.

"And I could see how strong the Supercars championship here was and the guys were getting paid really quite well and racing at home and being able to live at home was a really big bit of bait waving in front of my face. It was half of my life pretty much [I'd been away] at that point. And I haven't looked back, it's been amazing."

Indeed, Courtney still races in Australia's Supercars championship today, and bagged its title in 2010.

"It's surprising to be honest," Courtney laughs regarding his longevity. "The longer I go [on] the more I'm enjoying it, I'm having such a great time back here, the cars are fantastic, the championship's great and I'm really enjoying the racing. I think it's my 17th season or something, I'm always going on the pitlane and still



Courtney was picked for Jaguar testing, but a Monza crash awaited



Robbie Kerr (7) beat the compromised Courtney (1) to the F3 title



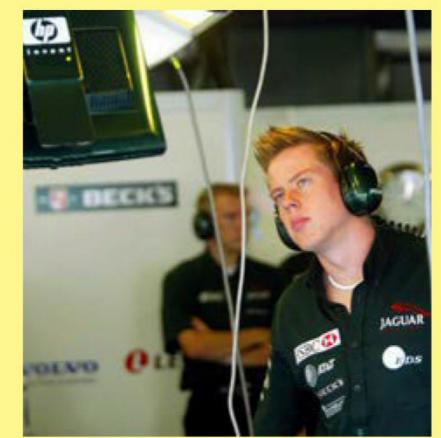
Courtney got a lot of attention when racing to British F3's table top

James's heart pierced by Jag

For James Courtney, even to get to sample a Formula 1 car is an achievement he looks back upon with fondness. "It was pretty amazing," he tells Motorsport News, "a little guy from west of Sydney in Australia, a long way away, working class family, gone all the way to drive a Formula 1 car. I had a lifelong dream and to want something and work your whole life towards it, to get there was pretty amazing. Not many people get to drive and experience that. To get that far was still an amazing achievement and something I'll never forget."

He recalls particularly his first run in the Jaguar: "I remember my first-ever test in an F1 car at Monza and being super nervous and Eddie Irvine just said to me 'just hold your foot flat, turn off the speed limiter and scare yourself, get it over and done with and then you'll be fine' [laughs]. So I did hit the button and it was like being shot out of a rocket."

"After doing Formula 3 and some Formula 3000 in testing I had a pretty good understanding of what you thought it was going to be like but the acceleration and braking was phenomenal, corner speeds weren't that surprising, but it pulled in eighth gears as what it did in first gear, it never ran out of steam."



F1 car was dream fulfilled



Courtney is an Australian Supercars fixture, and got the title in 2010

FEATURE



TOYOTA: MAKING A MEMORABLE MARK IN MOTORSPORT

We need your help to unearth the favourite racing Toyota of all. By Matt James

Photos: Motorsport Images, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

There used to be something quite endearing about the Japanese firms that tried to triumph on the global motorsport scene.

Ingenious and always memorable, the battlers from the Far East would simply not give up in their quest to crack the usually European-dominated big events and championships. In terms of rallying, the breakthrough came with Toyota in 1990 and then one year later, Mazda finally conquered Le Mans.

Toyota has prevailed in recent seasons and, having been unable to crack Formula 1, has been the benchmark on both the World Endurance Championship and the World Rally Championship.

Motorsport News editor Matt James said: "Toyota has become a mainstay of

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motorsport always ingenious and always inventive, and the Japanese firm has offered the racing and rallying world some truly spectacular machines over the last five decades. We have selected our favourites, and we'd like our readers to help us pinpoint which one has been the most memorable."

THE NOMINEES

1 Toyota Celica 2000GT

Toyota's first tentative steps in the World Rally Championship came with the 2000GT, and it was a winner in the top flight. The machine carried the Japanese firm's colour with pride and was a winner in the hands of Bjorn Waldegard in 1982 before the Group B era took over and the team switched to a twin-cam version, but the 2000GT had been the foundation for Toyota's huge success in the WRC.



2 Toyota Corolla AE86

Chris Hodgetts had been a mainstay of the British Saloon Car Championship – and the Toyota line-up – in the early 1980s, but it wasn't until he returned Japanese firm's fold in 1986 that things really took off. The Team Toyota GB-backed coupe-style machine took a remarkable run of 18 triumphs from 20 starts over a two-season campaign.



3 Toyota Celica GT-Four

From the moment it was first introduced into the World Rally Championship in 1988, the Toyota Celica GT-Four looked like a gamechanger. The story of the car ended in ignominy though, as Toyota Team Europe was found to have used an under-bonnet tweak to illegally ramp up the car's turbocharger power, and Toyota was banned from motorsport for a year.



4 Toyota TS010

As the long-distance landscape was changing, so did Toyota's offering. It needed to embrace the new 3.5-litre normally aspirated World Sportscar Championship rules and did so with the gorgeous Tony Southgate-penned TS010. It was an outlandish car for the outlandish regulations of the period.



5 Toyota GT-One
 If you were truly bonkers enough, you could have bought a Toyota GT-One to drive on the roads. That was the homologation requirement of the GT1 class, which the Japanese firm entered in 1998. The Dallara-built and Toyota Team Europe-run GT-ones looked much less like the road-going versions entered by Mercedes and Porsche at the time and therefore became more of a crowd favourite.

6 Toyota Tacoma 1998 Pikes Peak car

Pikes Peak expert Rod Millen had already won the event three times in versions of a Celica before the idea was created to build the truck-shaped Tacoma, which was fitted with a 2.1-litre IMSA-derived engine to take the 4700ft climb over the 12.4-mile course. Even Millen couldn't beat his 1998 effort of 10m07s when he returned a year later, although he did add a fifth crown and his fourth-straight event victory.

7 Toyota TF105

Mike Gascoyne helped pen the TF105, which was a time when all the grand prix learning was supposed to have been done and the results were expected. Ralf Schumacher and Jarno Trulli were plugged into the cockpit and Trulli's run of three podiums (two seconds and a third) over the opening five races looked promising and, at that stage, he was second only in the drivers' championship to eventual winner Fernando Alonso.



9 Toyota Yaris WRC

With its pulling power and budget, Toyota was able to gradually collect together the driving strength it wanted and, by 2019, it became the WRC's powerhouse it is today. Ott Tanak took the title in the Yaris with six wins, but Hyundai has the makes' crown. When Ogier joined a year later, the Japanese attack became impregnable and it hasn't lost a drivers' crown since.



8 Toyota TS-050

When Toyota joined the World Endurance Championship in 2012, it was clear that the global crown was one of its aims. There was another undeclared mission though that all with an eye to history knew about: it was desperate to finally prevail at Le Mans.

It finally did in 2018 with Fernando Alonso, Sébastien Buemi and Kazuki Nakajima claiming the win – the first of two for the crew and three for the TS050. Finally, the monkey was off Toyota's back – and it scooped two FIA World Endurance titles to boot. It was Toyota's dream-achieving sportscar.



10 Toyota Corolla

Switching to a new car all designed in-house is mammoth for any team, but in 2019 British Touring Car Championship team Speedworks Motorsport did not flinch from the challenge with the Corolla and got four wins in its maiden season. Driver Tom Ingram was in with a shot of the crown going into 2020's finale round and just lost out despite another three victories along the way. Christian and Amy Dick's team has expanded to running two machines.

WHAT'S ON

YOUTUBE REVIEW

Canadian Grands Prix at Montreal have a rich history of entertainment, much of which is available on YouTube. Our humble suggestion though is watching the somewhat neglected 1979 counter: a demonstration that it takes

only two cars to make a race. It had plenty counting against it in advance. The championship was already decided. Alan Jones in his mighty Williams FW07 looked on another level.

And had poleman Jones led off the line it likely wouldn't

have been much of a race. But he didn't, local hero Gilles Villeneuve did, and a fine race it was.

The BBC highlights are at: youtube.com/watch?v=xsmRUI_ssg. Intriguingly too it is topped and tailed by the other big story from the weekend, Niki

Lauda retiring from F1 (for the first time, anyway) literally by unbuckling during a practice session. Famous commentary duo Murray Walker and James Hunt explore the matter before and after the race.

Graham Keilloh



Villeneuve: a home hero

TV GUIDE



Hamilton has been a star in Montreal

With this weekend's latest Formula 1 Montreal visit, we likely can expect action. And Sky Sports F1 has a few past examples shown in full this (Thursday) evening. First at 1730hrs-1945hrs it's the madcap 2008 race, then at 2000hrs-2300hrs it's the even more madcap 2011 race. And if you still haven't had your fill, it's followed at 2300hrs-0100hrs by 2012's race.

As for this weekend, Channel 4's qualifying highlights are early on Sunday at 0830hrs-0930hrs while its race highlights are later that

day at 2300hrs-0100hrs. Sky Sports F1's weekend-preview F1 Show is on Friday at 2015hrs-2115hrs, while Ted Kravitz's Notebooks are at 2230hrs-2300hrs on Saturday for qualifying and at 2200hrs-2230hrs on Sunday for the race.

The channel's Montreal action is followed in fairly quick order by GT World Challenge Europe from Zandvoort at 0900hrs-1100hrs on Monday morning. Premier Sports 2 later on Monday meanwhile has BriSCA action from Cowdenbeath shown at 2200hrs-2300hrs.

LIVE TV

FORMULA 1 CANADA

Practice 1:

Friday, 1830hrs-

2015hrs,

Sky Sports F1

Practice 2:

Friday, 2145hrs-

2330hrs,

Sky Sports F1

Practice 3:

Saturday,

1745hrs-1910hrs,

Sky Sports F1

Qualifying:

Saturday,

2000hrs-2230hrs,

Sky Sports F1;

2030hrs-2200hrs

Sky Sports Main Event

Race:

Sunday,

1730hrs-2200hrs

(start time

1900hrs),

Sky Sports F1;

1830hrs-2100hrs,

Sky Sports Main Event

DTM IMOLA

Qualifying 1:

Saturday,

0900hrs-0945hrs,

BT Sport/ESPN

Race 1:

Saturday,

1215hrs-1400hrs,

BT Sport/ESPN

Qualifying 2:

Sunday, 0900hrs-

0945hrs, BT

Sport 3

RACE 2: Sunday, 1215hrs-1400hrs, BT Sport 3

AUSTRALIAN SUPER CARS DARWIN

Race 1:

Saturday,

0630hrs-

0800hrs,

BT Sport/ESPN

Race 2:

Sunday,

0330hrs-

0430hrs,

BT Sport 1

Race 3:

Sunday,

0630hrs-

0800hrs,

BT Sport 3

RALLYING SATURDAY

Kielder Forest Rally (spectators admitted)

Cumberland Sporting Car Club

Kielderforestrally.co.uk

SUNDAY

John Overend Stages (Melbourne)

North Humber Side Motor Club (no spectators)

northhumbersidemotorclub.co.uk

RACING FRIDAY-SUNDAY

Anglessey, N Wales

C1 night race: FF1600, Super Classic FF1600, BMW Compact, ST-XR Challenge, CityCar Cup, C1 Endurance, Legends, Karts Starts Friday, qualifying from 2210hrs, Saturday, racing from 1305hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)

Sunday, racing from 1138hrs (qualifying from 0905hrs)

Admission adult £14, under 13 free Web msv.com Contact 0344 225 4422

Donington Park National, Leics

HSCC meeting: Monoposto, Thundersports, Aurora / Geoff Lees Trophy, Historic F3, Historic FF2000, Historic FF1600, Classic FF1600, Historic Touring Cars, Guards Trophy, Historic Road Sports, '70s Road Sports, Classic Clubmans Starts Saturday, racing from 1356hrs (qualifying from 0905hrs)

Sunday, racing from tba (qualifying from 0900hrs)

Admission adult £19, under 13 free Web msv.com Contact 0344 225 4422

Snetterton 300, Norfolk

MSVR meeting: Porsche Club, Sports 2000, MSVR Allcomers, Focus Cup, Production Golf and BMW, Racing Saloons, Z Cars and New Generation

BMW, Porsche 911, Northern Saloon & Sports, HRDC Gerry Marshall Trophy Starts

Saturday, racing from 1125hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)

Sunday, racing from 1035hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)

Admission adult £15, under 13 free Web pembreycircuit.co.uk

SPORTING SCENE SATURDAY

Foxhall Heath Ipswich

National Hot Rods Angie Rowe Thunder 500

Admission: adults £22, concessions £19, children 5-14 £7. Starts: 1800hrs. Web: spedeworth.co.uk

Details correct at time of going to press. Please check with organisers before travelling.

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113860

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